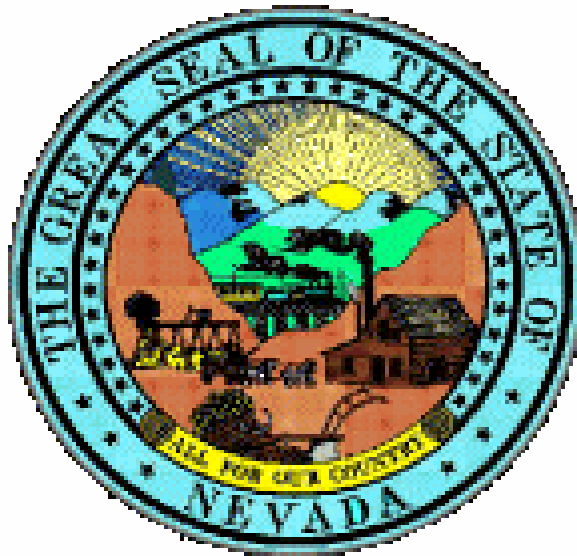


STATE OF NEVADA
Department of Human Resources
Division of Child and Family Services



**FIVE-YEAR CHILD AND FAMILY
SERVICES STATEWIDE PLAN (CFSP)**

**FOR
FY 2005 - 2009**

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**NEVADA CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN FY 2005-2009
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Glossary of Acronyms

AAICPC	Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
AFCARS	Adoption Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System
APHSA	American Public Human Services Association
ASFA	Adoption and Safe Families Act
ASPR	Annual Services Progress Report
BADA	Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse
CADRE	Citizen's Alliance for Disability Rights and Education
CAPTA	Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
CASA	Court Appointed Special Advocate
CCDFS	Clark County Department of Family Services
CFCIP	Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
CFSP	Child and Family Service Plan
CFSR	Child and Family Services Review
CPS	Child Protective Services
CRB	Children's Resources Bureau
CRP	Citizen Review Panel
CRT	Community Resource Teams
CWAF	Child Welfare Action Form
CWS	Child Welfare System
DCFS	Division of Child and Family Services
DHR	Department of Human Resources
DRS	Differential Response System
ETV	Educational Training Voucher
FASS	Family Assessment and Services System
FCAAN	Foster Care and Adoption Association of Nevada
FPO	Family Programs Office
FRC	Family Resource Center
HSSS	Human Services Support Specialist
ICAMA	Interstate Compact on Adoption and Medical Assistance
ICPC	Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children
ICWA	Indian Child Welfare Act
IFS	Intensive Family Services
ILP	Independent Living Plan
IMS	Information Management System
MDT	Multi-Disciplinary Team
MEPA/IPA	Multi-Ethnic Placement Act/Inter-Ethnic Placement Act
NAC	Nevada Administrative Code
NCANDS	National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System
NCANS	Nevada Child Abuse and Neglect System
NCC	Neighborhood Care Center
NCC	Nevada Children's Center
NCCMT	Neighborhood Care Center Management Team

NCFAS	North Carolina Family Assessment Survey
NRC	National Resource Center
NCWRCOI	National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NTP	Nevada Training Partnership
PEP	Parents Encouraging Parents
SACWIS	Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System
SAFF	Sierra Association of Foster Families
TALCIT	Technical Assistance to Local Communities and Indian Tribes
TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
UNITY	Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth
WCDSS	Washoe County Department of Social Services
WIN	Wrap (Around) In Nevada

Section I. Administration of the Plan

State Agency Administering Programs

The State of Nevada, Division of Child and Family Services (Division), within the Department of Human Services, is specifically dedicated to providing services to children and families. The Division is responsible for Children's Mental Health (in the two largest populated counties), Youth Corrections and Child Welfare Services. As such, the implementation and administration of Title IV-E, Title IV-B, Subpart 1 (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) are the responsibility of the Division.

State Demographics

For the past 17 years, Nevada has been the fastest growing state in the nation. In 2003, the population reached 2,296,556 inhabitants with growth primarily occurring in two counties: Washoe and Clark. The Division's organizational structure and program delivery are influenced by the state size and concentration of population in these two counties. For the most part, growth in Nevada's rural counties has been minimal. For the purpose of this plan, demographic composites have been compiled to reflect three regional service areas.

- *Clark County:* Seventy-nine percent of the growth the state experienced in 2003 occurred in Las Vegas/Clark County, reaching 1,620,748 residents. This comprises 71% of the state's population. Approximately 26% of Clark County's population are children under the age of 18. In 2002, the average family income in the Southern Nevada Region was \$48,890. Of the three regions, Clark County has the highest child poverty rate at 14.1%, the most single parent families at 30.8%, and the highest teen birth rates (35.5% per 1,000 females (1999-2001). Approximately 23% of the state's substantiated reports of child abuse came from this region (22.7%).
- *Washoe County:* In 2003, the number of residents in Washoe County increased by 3.8% to 373,233 residents or 16.2% of the state's overall population. Approximately 24% of Washoe County's population is comprised of children under the age of 18. In 2002, Washoe County reported the highest average family income at \$54,572. Twenty-eight percent of Washoe County's families are single parent households, and the child poverty rate is reported to be 12%. Teen birth rates were 34.1 per 1,000 females (1999-2000). Washoe County reported the highest substantiated abuse and neglect reports (25.1%).
- *Rural Counties:* Rural Nevada comprises 13.1% of the state's population and encompasses 15 counties, six of which lost residents in 2003. Overall, the region's population grew by just 1% to 302,582 residents. Approximately 14% of the population are children under the age of 18. The average family income in rural counties is \$37,176 and the child poverty rate averages 12.25%. Teen birth

rates average 21.31 per 1,000 females. The rural counties have the lowest number of substantiated child abuse and neglect reports (12.6).

Integration of Child Welfare Services

In addition to geographic challenges, Nevada is the only state that has operated under a bifurcated child welfare system where counties with populations of 100,000 (Washoe County and Clark County) provided Child Protective Services and the Division provided child welfare services.

Child Protective Services included:

- Preventative services
- Investigations of abuse and neglect
- Family assessments
- Emergency shelter care and/or short term foster care
- In-home services

Child Welfare Services included:

- Placement services (family foster care, higher levels including group and residential care)
- Case management for foster care and adoptions
- Independent living
- Family preservation
- Family foster home recruitment, training and licensing

In 1999, a legislatively supported pilot project was conducted in Washoe County between the Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS) and the Division to integrate services. It was recognized that the bifurcated system caused children to remain in the system for a longer period of time due to additional legal actions, multiple case managers, changes in foster homes and service providers. Evaluation results of this two-year pilot demonstrated less duplication of efforts and more comprehensive and consistent services to children and families in a system that was not bifurcated.

Assembly Bill 1 (AB1), as passed by the 2001 Nevada Special Legislative Session, redefined “child welfare services” to include protective services, foster care services, and services related to adoption. It permits the transfer of child welfare services from the Division of Child and Family Services (Division) to a county whose population is 100,000 or more (Washoe and Clark). The legislation also recognizes that the state and counties have a shared fiscal responsibility for the costs of providing child welfare services and must be committed to ensuring, through negotiation in good faith, future maintenance of efforts in providing those services and to equitably sharing future costs for providing these services.

Washoe County

Transition of the programs to Washoe County Department of Social Services occurred in two phases, which started in April 2002 and was completed in January

2003. Washoe County now provides the full range of child welfare services and is maximizing (utilizing) appropriate federal funding sources such as TANF, Medicaid and Title IV-E.

Clark County

The transition of programs to Clark County occurs in three phases. The first phase transferred 10.51 FTE in October 2003 to provide Family Preservation Services, and the second phase in April 2004 resulted in the transfer of 42.02 FTE to provide Licensing and Recruitment, Adoption, Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, and Children's Resources Bureau services. The third and final phase will occur in October 2004 when the remaining 101.51 FTE will transfer to the county to provide Case Management and Eligibility services. Clark County utilizes TANF and Medicaid and recently submitted its first Title IV-E claim.

A. Vision, Principles, Goals, and Objectives

The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, together in genuine partnership with families, communities and county governmental agencies, provides support and services to assist Nevada's children and families in reaching their full human potential. We recognize 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.

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. 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.

MISSION

The Division of Child and Family Services is responsible for child welfare service delivery in rural Nevada and oversight of urban county-operated child welfare services, children's mental health services in urban Nevada, juvenile justice services including state-operated youth training centers and youth parole and child care licensing. Our mission 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.

PURPOSES

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.

B. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The term "Statewide" used in the following goals and objectives are collaborative activities involving representatives from Washoe County, Clark County, the Rural Region, and DCFS administration.

Goal #1 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>SAFETY OUTCOME 1: Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.</p> <p>SAFETY ACTION PLANNING GROUP I</p>	<p>I. Statewide standards for substantiations are present.</p> <p>II. Statewide policy delineates timeframes for initiating a response including face-to-face contact with alleged child victim within established timeframes.</p> <p>III. Statewide policy for the use of ongoing safety and risk assessments is in place.</p> <p>IV. A case planning protocol on the use of assessment results and the provision of services to families, relatives and guardians is in place.</p>	<p>STATEWIDE POLICY</p> <p>I. Develop a statewide policy for the use of statewide, standardized CPS intake screening and risk assessment tools. Collaborate with National Resource Center for Child Maltreatment to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. develop a CPS intake screening tool and risk assessment tool and, 2. develop evidence based, best practice policies/procedures and, 3. define timeliness of investigation requirements. <p>II. Develop statewide policy to require that law enforcement medical and school personnel have "priority" access in reporting child abuse and child neglect .</p> <p>III. Develop a statewide policy that defines "substantiated reports", "subsequent reports", "immediate", and face-to face contact in compliance with federal requirements.</p> <p>IV. Establish agency capacity for child welfare personnel response to allegations of child abuse and neglect occur on a 7 day 24 hour basis.</p> <p>TRAINING</p> <p>I. All hotline, assessment and ongoing permanency child welfare and state juvenile services staff will be provided training regarding the intake-screening tool and it's use for all new referrals and for all allegations involving active or ongoing cases.</p> <p>II. Provide training to child welfare and state juvenile services personnel in the risk assessment tool and how to use the form as a tool at the field level throughout the life of the case.</p> <p>QUALITY ASSURANCE</p> <p>I. Establish a quality assurance measurement to assess compliance with policies. Supervisors will incorporate the risk assessment in a case staffing, case planning and case reviews.</p> <p>II. Explore efficacy of augmentation with UNITY the addition of data elements from the intake-screening tool to facilitate a "pop up" or an alert function to indicate previous CPS reports.</p>

GOAL #2 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>SAFETY OUTCOME 2: Children are safely maintained In their homes whenever possible and appropriate.</p> <p>SAFETY ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. Consistent assessment, prevention, intervention and support services will be provided to the family to protect children in the home and prevent their removal.</p> <p>II. Consistent assessment, prevention, intervention and support services will be provided to the foster family and/or relatives to protect children in foster care or alternative placement.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Develop a statewide policy for the use of a statewide, standardized safety assessment tool.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> II. Provide ongoing mandatory training to case managers and supervisors on the statewide policy and instrument. Include training on how to better engage the family in the assessment process and provide specific supervisor training to improve the monitoring of safety.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Enhance UNITY to measure quality improvement and compliance with the safety assessment statewide policy and use of the assessment tool. II. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, identify strengths, the need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs. III. Establish baseline data by 2005 and comparative data by 2006 for the Federal Child Welfare Outcome 1 on reduction of recurrence of child abuse and/or neglect. This is the number or percent of all children reported within a specific time frame of 6 months from the date of the report that had another substantiated report. (CAPTA objective and Measure) IV. Establish baseline data by 2005 and comparative data by 2006 for the Federal Child Welfare Outcome 2 on reduction of incidence of child abuse and/or neglect in foster care. This is the number or percent of all children reported within a specific time frame who were the subject of a substantiated report by a foster parent or facility staff. (CAPTA objective and Measure)</p>
<p>SAFETY ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2 (continued)</p>	<p>I. Services will be provided to engage families in the process and assess their service needs in order to protect children in the home and prevent removal.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Identify and implement a Nevada case management model that includes best practices for a) assessment, b) family engagement and c) case management skills needed for appropriate case planning, identification of service provider needs and service provision.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Provide training to case managers and supervisors on family engagement best practices, the Nevada case management model and use of the assessment tool in the provision of ongoing case management, service assessment and service provider needs and service delivery.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action, identification of service provider needs and identification of staff training needs.</p>

GOAL #2 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>SAFETY OUTCOME 2: Children are safely maintained In their homes whenever possible and appropriate.</p> <p>SAFETY ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2 (continued)</p>	<p>I. Children will be protected from risk of harm. II. Client contact and home visitation will ensure that such visits promote the purpose of the case plan and safety of the child.</p>	<p>STATEWIDE POLICY (Please refer to Safety Outcome I, page 1.) I. Develop a statewide policy that requires the use of a checklist on home visits that includes the purpose, quality and frequency of the visit to ensure safety of the child.</p> <p>TRAINING I. Provide ongoing training to case managers and supervisors on the law, regulation, statewide policy and checklist. Include training on how to better engage the family in the visitation process and provide specific supervisor training to improve the monitoring of client contact and home visitation to ensure safety of the child. II. Provide checklist training that includes the purpose, quality and frequency of the visit to ensure safety of the child.</p> <p>QUALITY ASSURANCE I. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs. II. Establish standardized requirements for the supervisor to observe case managers on home visits.</p>

GOAL #3 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.</p> <p>CASE PLANNING AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 1.</p>	<p>I. The statewide concurrent planning statewide policy is based on family assessments and includes youth and family engagement to ensure permanency.</p> <p>II. Thorough, appropriate, consistent and timely permanency goals will be established.</p> <p>III. Prevention of foster care re-entry is effective.</p> <p>IV. Shelter care is not used inappropriately or for extended periods</p> <p>V. Children in foster care will experience placement stability.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> (Please refer to Safety Outcome 2, page 2.)</p> <p>I. Collaborate with stakeholders and citizen action committees for discussions and agreement to develop a common definition of concurrent planning that complies with ASFA Guidelines and seek input from judicial members.</p> <p>II. Research best practices for a concurrent case planning format and design a case plan court report. Submit draft report to courts for approval. Submit case plan document to UNITY for creation.</p> <p>III. Revise statewide policy to reflect implementation of revised case plan document and timeliness requirements to be utilized statewide.</p> <p>IV. Develop statewide policy to ensure that all case planning will demonstrate timeliness and youth and family involvement.</p> <p>V. Revise statewide policy manual to reflect implementation of the concurrent case planning document to be utilized statewide.</p> <p>VI. Develop policy and protocol on the utilization of shelter care.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Create a training module and provide training on involving youth and family in the planning process.</p> <p>II. Provide statewide training on concurrent planning court report format and process to case managers, supervisors, and the judiciary.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Discuss with UNITY, changes required for a concurrent case plan court report. Submit revised case plan court report to UNITY for creation.</p> <p>II. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on a) use of the case plan court report and process b) youth and family involvement in the case plan process c) use of shelter care.</p> <p>III. Discuss with UNITY, changes required for a narrative section on youth and family involvement within the case plan court report. Submit revised case plan report to UNITY for creation.</p> <p>IV. Develop reports in UNITY to address timeliness.</p>

GOAL #3 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.</p> <p>CASE PLANNING AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 1 (continued)</p>	<p>I. Legal and social work staff will understand the concurrent planning statewide policy/process and utilization of appropriate permanency goals.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> (Please refer to page 4.)</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Create a child welfare training module for supervisors and management staff on use of concurrent planning and court report format in order to provide individualized case manager unit training.</p> <p>II. Utilization of concurrent case planning training in academy for new case managers / social workers.</p> <p>III. Coordinate with Court Improvement Project to provide CLE's for training of legal professionals on ASFA and concurrent case planning.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Supervisors will reinforce the use of the concurrent case planning document and training methods during regular supervision activities and staff meetings.</p>
<p>FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS AND ADOPTION ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. The state has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the state for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u></p> <p>I. State to ensure regional recruitment plans address the ethnic and diversity needs of the children in the region and include development of partnerships with local civic and social organizations and tribal entities.</p> <p>II. Enhance statewide policy to initiate on-going and active recruitment of bilingual foster and adoptive parents, staff trainers and recruitment and retention specialists to meet the needs of the state's increasing Hispanic and cross cultural populations.</p> <p>III. Develop strategies to address retention of foster parents.</p> <p>IV. Evaluate barriers to timely licensure of foster homes to reduce the drop out rate and develop strategic approaches to reducing barriers to the licensing process.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Develop training on new policies and procedures related to diligent recruitment and MEPA requirements.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Quality assurance components will be developed upon completion of the above action steps.</p>

GOAL #3 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. CASE REVIEW AND RELATED COURT ISSUES IMPACTING TIMELY PERMANENCY ACTION PLANNING GROUP	I. The case review system provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review. II. The state will have in place a court and legal training component for child welfare staff and their legal representatives.	<u>RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COURTS</u> I. Make a recommendation to the Court Improvement Project to explore implementation of "time certain" review hearings in every jurisdiction statewide. <u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> Please refer to goal 3 on page 4 & 5. I. Determine mandatory elements and findings for each case plan court report. <u>TRAINING</u> I. IV-E University contractors will develop a training component for child welfare agencies legal representatives. <u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the periodic review of the court/administrative status of each child.
CASE REVIEW AND RELATED COURT ISSUES IMPACTING TIMELY PERMANENCY ACTION PLANNING GROUP	I. Provide a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the state has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 13 months thereafter.	<u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Identify data needed to assess adequacy of family resources to obtain legal representation of children and parents. II. Discuss with IMS the capability to enhance UNITY to measure access to legal representation. III. Develop management reports to assess access and identify barriers.

GOAL #3 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.</p> <p>CASE REVIEW AND RELATED COURT ISSUES IMPACTING TIMELY PERMANENCY ACTION PLANNING GROUP</p>	<p>I. The process for termination of parental rights proceedings is in accordance with provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.</p> <p>II. TPRs are completed without delay. (Note: Proper documentation and action steps related to diligent efforts and reasonable efforts are necessary to prevent delay of TPRs.)</p>	<p><u>RECOMMENDATION TO THE COURTS:</u> Recommend to the Court Improvement Project that a protocol be developed to streamline the process for TPRs in the court system.</p> <p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> (Please refer to Permanency Outcome 1, page 3.)</p> <p>I. Review the current worksheet and process to streamline the preparation of TPRs.</p> <p>II. Develop a statewide policy defining the process for "diligent efforts", "reasonable efforts", and documentation protocol.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. IV-E University contractors will develop a training component for child welfare agency staff, tribal representatives, legal representatives and the judiciary on what constitutes a "compelling reason" not to file for termination of parental rights and "reasonable efforts".</p> <p>II. Request National Resource Center for Child Welfare Training and Evaluation to conduct annual training for child welfare agency staff, legal representatives and the judiciary on current ASFA regulations and ICWA.</p> <p>III. Develop training for child welfare agency staff on the use of the TPR checklist.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Explore enhancement of data elements in UNITY to track the TPR process.</p> <p>II. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the completion of TPRs.</p>

GOAL #3 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.</p> <p>CASE REVIEW AND RELATED COURT ISSUES IMPACTING TIMELY PERMANENCY ACTION PLANNING GROUP</p>	<p>I. Foster parents, pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers of children in foster care will be routinely notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in any review or hearing held with respect to the child.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Establish statewide policy and protocol for: the use of a letter to primary caregiver (foster parent, pre-adoptive parents, relative caregivers) to encourage participation the development and availability to primary caregivers a comprehensive progress review form that can be forwarded to the judiciary for informational purposes and treatment team efficacy.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Develop and provide training for child welfare staff on the statewide policy and protocol for the notification of and involvement in reviews.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Explore ways to provide feedback to foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of effectiveness of their court involvement. II. Develop a statewide case review process and management to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the use of form letters and progress review forms.</p>
<p>FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS AND ADOPTION ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. Effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources facilitates timely adoption or permanent placements for waiting children.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Review statewide policy and protocol for revision for: a) timely adoptions for older children b) timely permanent placements for older children. II. Develop statewide policy for prospective adopting matching process to include: notification to adoptive parents of a possible match (status); and Adoption Review Team (ART) process. III. Participate with national and regional recruitment organizations, as they provide technical assistance and resources, revising statewide policy and protocol as appropriate.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Develop training for child welfare staff on the statewide policy and protocol regarding adoption placement and best practices to minimize barriers.</p>

GOAL #3 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS AND ADOPTION ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2 (continued)		<u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Enhance cross-jurisdictional and timely adoption through statewide review and solution-focused teams to address interstate placement and recruitment issues. II. Develop management information to assess compliance, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the amelioration of adoption placement barriers.
FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS AND ADOPTION ACTION PLANNING GROUP 1	I. Reunification, guardianship or permanent placement with relatives will involve families in all aspects of permanency planning and implementation. II. Child welfare agencies will make concerted efforts to attain the goal of reunification in a timely manner.	<u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> (Please refer to page 2, and 4.) I. Encourage recruitment of fictive families (friends and neighbors considered by the child to "be" family including tribal family members) and provide resources to support those placements. II. Develop statewide policy on involvement of families in all aspects of permanency planning and implementation. <u>TRAINING</u> I. Train child welfare staff on the purpose, structure and identification of goals and objectives when conducting multidisciplinary planning meetings. II. Train child welfare staff on the reunification statewide policy. III. Train CW staff on licensing standards and applicability to fictive families. <u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Develop a statewide case review process to generate management information to assess compliance, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on reunification efforts. II. Identify appropriate caseload size for each program component, evaluate the need to increase the number of case managers and reduce caseloads as determined to facilitate quality program and service delivery improvement. III. Provide technological support (keypads, dictation phones) to help case managers complete paperwork efficiently.

GOAL #3 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>PERMANENCY OUTCOME 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.</p> <p>FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS AND ADOPTION ACTION PLANNING GROUP 1</p>	<p>I. The state will have in place a system to help youth transition to self-sufficiency.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Revise case planning process to assure that case plans are individualized and youth driven, and the process involves coordination with tribal entities, as appropriate. II. Develop and maintain Youth Advisory Boards. III. Develop collaborative activities with service providers and potential sub grantees regarding application for DCFS grants for the purpose of developing transitional housing opportunities.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Train child welfare supervisors and case managers, including tribal entities, on Independent Living, how to identify significant connections and how to perform diligent search. II. Train child welfare staff, including tribal entities, so that they are knowledgeable about the full array of housing options that best meet the individual needs of youth. III. Train foster parents and care providers, including those on tribal land, regarding independent living services and resources.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Develop a statewide case review process to generate management information to assess compliance, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on transition efforts.</p>

GOAL #4 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>PERMANENCY OUTCOME 2: The continuity of relationships and connections is preserved for Children.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 1</p>	<p>I. Relative placements are facilitated whenever appropriate.</p> <p>II. Concerted efforts are made to ensure children are placed in close proximity to parents/relatives.</p> <p>III. Concerted efforts are made to ensure children are placed with siblings.</p> <p>IV. Concerted efforts are made to promote visits with parents and siblings with sufficient frequency.</p> <p>V. Diligent efforts are made to preserve connections to families, including paternal relatives in addition to maternal relatives and heritage.</p> <p>VI. Diligent efforts are made to support parent-child relationships of children in foster care</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u></p> <p>I. Develop statewide policy on relative search and placement.</p> <p>II. Establish a protocol for continued safety assessment of all placements/home, including relatives.</p> <p>III. Establish protocol for relative search attempts.</p> <p>IV. Develop protocol for assessment of relative placements to identify strengths, needs and resources.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Provide child welfare staff, including tribal entities, training on ongoing case management responsibilities to emphasize the importance of providing prospective guardians with information on community resources.</p> <p>II. Provide staff training on policies and procedures for relative search and placement, and assessment protocol.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Explore UNITY with data elements to measure relative search attempts and results, notifications and create documentation screen for assessment of placement.</p> <p>II. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on relative placements.</p>

GOAL #5 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs. (Items 17,18,19,20)</p> <p>ASSESSMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. Worker visits with parents and children will be of sufficient frequency and quality to support the enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs, service delivery, ensure safety and promote attainment of goals.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> (Please refer to page 3.) I. Develop a statewide minimum standard, statewide policy and procedures for visitations with parents and children.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Develop training in quality worker visits with parents and children including utilization of appropriate community support resources.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Use of caseload management reports to assess practical expectation of individual caseload/worker demands. II. Develop a statewide case review process to generate management information to assess compliance, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the frequency and quality of visits.</p>

GOAL #5 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.</p> <p>CASE PLANNING AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p> <p>&</p> <p>ASSESSMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 1</p>	<p>I. The needs and services of children, fathers, mothers, and foster parents are enhanced through the assessment and planning process.</p> <p>II. The service needs of children and fathers will be adequately assessed and addressed.</p> <p>III. More in-depth evaluations for underlying problems will be conducted to meet the needs of children, parents and foster parents.</p> <p>IV. Case plans are developed with the parents, and address the specific, individualized needs of the children and family.</p> <p>V. Collaborative efforts with stakeholders occur related to CFSP planning process.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u></p> <p>I. Develop and implement a child and family team approach which stresses case planning through collaboration with all available and interested family members, child welfare staff, including tribal entities, and community agencies to address the long-term success of the children and their families.</p> <p>II. In conjunction with the Nevada case management model, develop an initial, uniform, comprehensive inventory/assessment of the family's strengths and needs.</p> <p>III. Facilitate statewide policy change statewide for alternative work hours so that plans are developed with child and family at a time convenient to the family and delivered with the oversight of integrated Child and Family teams.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Train child welfare case managers, on the inventory/assessment.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Develop a schedule for case managers and their supervisors to perform ongoing case work reviews, documented on a Record of Supervisory Review.</p> <p>II. Standardize employee evaluation tools so they have the same criteria.</p> <p>III. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the team approach of case planning (Nevada case management model).</p>

GOAL #5 (continued) & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>WELL-BEING OUTCOME 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.</p> <p>ASSESSMENT ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. Engage youth and youth that are fathers.</p> <p>II. Diligent efforts are made to preserve connection to families, including paternal relatives in addition to maternal relatives and heritage.</p>	<p><u>RECOMMENDATION TO THE COURTS</u> Recommend to the CIP that a protocol be established for the courts to routinely order mothers to provide names and information about alleged fathers.</p> <p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Develop a statewide policy on engagement and inclusion of fathers.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Gather information and review literature regarding the issues and barriers around engaging fathers, identify best practices and conduct training to child welfare staff including tribal entities. II. a) Provide youth and youth that are fathers with a) training opportunities in positive parenting and have curriculum available for use in foster homes, correctional facilities and treatment centers b) provide foster home organizations, correctional facilities and treatment centers with training to encourage the establishment of support groups for fathers.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs to ensure the engagement of fathers.</p>

GOAL #6 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>WELL-BEING OUTCOME 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.</p> <p>CHILD WELFARE SERVICE CONTINUUM AND SERVICE ARRAY GROUP 1</p>	<p>I. Provision of the educational needs of the child will be enhanced by the development of policies, procedures, a standardized assessment instrument and staff training.</p> <p>II. Diligent efforts are made to meet children's educational needs.</p> <p>III. The Physical, mental health and substance abuse needs of children are met consistently and effectively.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u></p> <p>I. a) Develop policies and procedures for assessing, documenting, and providing educational services.</p> <p>b) Develop a policy and protocol to establish a statewide system for educational liaison activities with regionalized points of contact for schools.</p> <p>II. Develop protocol for a statewide child welfare agency educational checklist for both in home and out of home cases. This checklist is to be used by all staff, be broad based in its scope and includes educational-related items. It can be filed in the child record/UNITY.</p> <p>III. Ensure a statewide policy exists which mandates that the caregiver is provided with or has the knowledge to obtain a child's educational record within 30 days of placement.</p> <p>IV. Develop a protocol for increasing staff awareness and competency in obtaining a child's educational record.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Include in case management training a component that focuses on the special education needs of children and the importance of providing the caretaker with this type of information for children with disabilities.</p> <p>II. Coordinate provision of staff/caretaker training that enhances their understanding of the entire educational system to include assessment processes, access to specialized services and management of a child's needs.</p> <p>III. Coordinate provision of training to staff/caretakers on the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).</p> <p>IV. Provide training to enhance coordination between IDEA and ILP planning.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Establish a minimum requirement for annual, collaborative meetings between the CW agencies and the school district for continued service delivery improvement.</p> <p>II. Explore with Information Management System the enhancement of UNITY to generate an automatic notification letter for schools when a change of placement occurs.</p> <p>III. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the provision of services to ensure the educational needs of the child are met and that educational records are obtained and placed in the case record.</p>

GOAL #7 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
<p>WELL-BEING OUTCOME 3: Children receive appropriate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.</p> <p>CHILD WELFARE SERVICES CONTINUUM AND SERVICE ARRAY GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. All children and their siblings under a formal case plan, will receive EPSDT screenings within 30 days of child entering CW, JJ, or BH services.</p> <p>II. The Nevada case management model will address identified needs EPSDTIII. Standardized behavioral health assessment tools will be identified and implemented with all children entering CW, JJ and MH services.</p> <p>IV. Youth, ages 16 years and older, who are in child welfare, juvenile justice and/or mental health services will be supported in their transition to adulthood through a youth-driven transitional care program that includes referral for services to meet their physical and mental health and substance abuse treatment needs.</p> <p>V. Ensure behavioral health contracts are for evidence-based interventions and are performance-based.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u></p> <p>I. The Division of Child and Family Services in collaboration with parents, Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services, Division of Health, Division of Health Care Finance and Planning, counties and behavioral health providers, identify research-based, age appropriate behavioral health screening instruments and select standardized instruments,</p> <p>II. Through the PIP, additional policies, procedures and action steps will be established related to the behavioral, physical and mental health needs of children.</p> <p>III. Explore a change in definition of severe emotional disturbance in NAC to include substance abuse.</p> <p>IV. Explore the possibility to extend Medicaid benefits to youth emancipating from the child welfare and juvenile justice systems to age 23.</p> <p>V. Implement statewide policy on performance based contracts.</p> <p>VI. Refine the protocol to improve access and transition to Division of Mental Health and Disability Services.</p> <p>VII. Develop a memorandum of understanding with Medicaid to</p> <p>a) assist with recruitment of service providers statewide</p> <p>b) assist the Department with problem resolution of Division service providers to prevent decrease in number of providers.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Train child welfare case managers, including tribal entities, on the identified behavioral health-screening tool.</p> <p>II. Provide training to families, case managers, and providers in evidence-based interventions and performance-based contracting.</p> <p>III. Provide training on all new policies and procedures.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u></p> <p>I. Explore enhancement of UNITY to capture documentation of referrals for physical and mental health assessments and services.</p> <p>II. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the implementation of the behavioral health assessment and performance of behavioral health contractors.</p>

GOAL #8 & ACTION PLANNING GROUP	OBJECTIVE	ACTION STEPS
<p>GOAL: THE SYSTEM OF CARE WILL BE CULTURALLY COMPETENT</p> <p>FOSTER CARE PLACEMENTS AND ADOPTION ACTION PLANNING GROUP 2</p>	<p>I. The state's cultural diversity plan includes staff development to promote service delivery that is culturally responsive to the needs of children and families.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u> I. Create a statewide Diversity Committee, with internal and external stakeholders including Nevada Tribal Entities and National Resource Center for Child Welfare of Organizational Improvement to develop a cultural diversity plan.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u> I. Train all staff on new policies & procedures related to the cultural diversity plan.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE</u> I. Develop a statewide case review process and management reports to assess compliance, strengths, need for corrective action and identification of staff training needs on the cultural diversity plan.</p>

GOAL # 9 DATA & QUALITY ASSURANCE	OBJECTIVES	ACTION STEPS
<p>GOAL: THE STATE HAS AN IDENTIFIABLE QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM WITH IDENTIFIABLE REGIONALIZED STRATEGIES</p> <p>DATA AND QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTION PLANNING GROUP</p>	<p>I. The state is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, evaluates the quality of the services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.</p> <p>II. UNITY can identify the status, demographics, location, and goals for children in foster care.</p> <p>III. Stakeholders are engaged in the process of identifying goals and objectives of the CFSP.</p> <p>IV. Consultation occurs with representatives on annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.</p> <p>V. Standards are applied for foster family homes and child care institutions.</p> <p>VI. Background checks are completed.</p>	<p><u>STATEWIDE POLICY</u></p> <p>I. Develop statewide policy and procedures to operationalize a formal Quality Assurance (QA) system with the following components:</p> <p>a) adopt outcomes and standards b) incorporate QA throughout the agency c) gather data and information d) analyze data and information e) use analyses and information to make improvements.</p> <p><u>TRAINING</u></p> <p>I. Train staff on the use of the quality assurance system and caseload and management reports.</p> <p><u>QUALITY ASSURANCE DEVELOPMENTAL STEPS:</u></p> <p>I. Evaluate caseworker roles, identify functions that could be provided by paraprofessionals and provide that support for improved QA.</p> <p>II. Establish a collaborative statewide QA review team that meets quarterly and utilizes a system of case review modeled on the Federal Child and Family Services on-site case review process.</p> <p>III. Generate reports (monthly, quarterly and annually) that will produce documentation demonstrating compliance with specific practice standards. UNITY will produce reports to all staff and organizational levels monthly, quarterly and annually).</p> <p>IV. Distribute information reports (individual worker, caseload, office, district, region, statewide) that track outcomes (including the six national standards) and describe case status and progress toward goals and benchmarks.</p> <p>V. Generate caseworker, supervisor, manager reports that are accessible to multiple levels of staff and have “drill-down” capabilities for report summary and detail.</p> <p>VI. Establish collaborative review teams that will meet to analyze the data from the above reports and case file review reports and compile a report of findings and recommendations.</p> <p>VII. Leadership will assess program improvement recommendations and develop and monitor corrective action plans and outcomes for continuous quality improvement.</p>

Section II. Planning Process

Nevada's Child and Family Services on-site Review (CFSR) was completed on February 27, 2004. The final report was received June 2, 2004. Nevada has chosen to use the results of the Statewide Assessment and the Final Report Findings as the foundation for the development of the FY 2005-2009 CFSP. The Division of Child and Family Services has instituted a planning process for the Child and Family Services Plan (CFSP). The planning process has occurred in the following four phases:

- **Phase 1:**

The Division used the development of the Child and Family Services Statewide Assessment as an opportunity to identify critical areas to be addressed in the IV-B Plan and in preparation for the Program Improvement Plan (PIP). Internal and external stakeholders, including tribal entities, provided input through surveys and focus groups.

- **Phase 2:**

In January 2004 the Division partnered with the National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement (NCWRCOI) to participate in a training session on the principles of strategic planning and the purpose of integrating the five-year plan with child welfare, mental health and youth corrections in order to achieve better outcomes for children and families in Nevada. The federal requirements for planning, best practice for strategic planning and the logic model process was presented. The upcoming Child and Family Services Review was discussed, as the outcomes of the review will have direct impact on the five-year Child and Family Services Plan. Participants included statewide leadership from child welfare, mental health and youth corrections agencies. The 90 participants, included staff from the Division, representatives from Clark County and Washoe County, Rural Region, mental health services, juvenile services and UNITY, the Division's Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System.

- **Phase 3:**

A smaller group of state and county policy and decision makers, along with the NRCWRCOI, met in March 2004 to design Nevada's planning structure and to clarify roles and responsibilities. Key stakeholders to include in plan development and oversight were identified.

- **Phase 4:**

In April 2004, 156 internal and external stakeholders came together for a two-day training conference in Las Vegas to develop Nevada's five-year strategic master plan. The NRCWRCOI, in partnership with the Nevada Division Administrator and County Child Welfare Agency Directors, facilitated the overall planning process. Stakeholders were organized in Action Planning Groups that focused on a specific theme which covered one or more items identified from the CFSR. The Action Planning Groups then, through collaborative efforts, submitted specific objectives, action steps and evaluation criteria to the Division for analysis. This analysis was

compiled and submitted to key participants, including the Division Administrator, other Division administrative staff, and Directors of county child welfare agencies for additional analysis. Information gleaned from this final analysis was incorporated into the five-year state plan and will also be incorporated into the Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The participation of all stakeholders in this collaborative effort was the key to the successful completion of the Statewide Five-Year Plan.

Action Planning Groups	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Planning • Assessment • Foster Care Placement and Adoption 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Array • Case Review/Legal System • Independent Living • Training • Data & Quality Assurance

Each action planning group was given the task to develop action strategies linked to outcome measures from the CFSR. Groups reported to all participants who in turn voted through an automated polling system on priority items for immediate action. The Action Planning Groups were facilitated by co-chairs who were responsible for the completion of the action plan from their group.

An array of statewide internal and external stakeholders participated in the Action Planning Groups. Regional participation was as follows:

Clark County	35%
Washoe County	36%
Rural Counties	26%

Internal Stakeholders
<p>Internal stakeholder participants represented state and county staff from child welfare, mental health and youth services from the following agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division of Child and Family Services • Washoe County Department of Social Services • Clark County Department of Family Services

External Stakeholders	
Consumers	Juvenile Services
Parents	Clark County Juvenile Probation
Foster and Group Home Parents	Juvenile Justice Commission
Current and Former Foster Youth	Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrators
Contract Service Providers, Tribal Entities and Nonprofit Organizations	University Partners
Boys and Girls Town	UNR School of Social Work
Stepping Stones Tribal Shelter	Boyd School of Law
Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth	UNLV School of Social Work
Health Providers/Community Members	Legal Community
Medical Community Representative	Rural and Washoe County Judges
Family Counseling Services	Attorney General's Office
Mental Health Plan Advisory Committee	Chief District Attorney
Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee	Court Improvement Project
Washoe County Mental Health Consortium	Washoe Legal Services-Attorney Representing Children
Child and Family Advocates	Public Defender's Office
Court Appointed Special Advocates	Other State Agencies
Children's Advocates	Nevada Governor's Office
Nevada PEP (Parents Encouraging Parents)	Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services-Rural Clinics
Division of Health - Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse	Division of Health Care Financing and Policy-Medicaid

Section III. Child and Family Services Continuum

A. Child Abuse Neglect and Prevention

Children's Trust Fund

Each State has created a State Children's Trust Fund with the specific goal of preventing child maltreatment. Each Children's Trust Fund is charged with coordinating prevention activities by promoting and funding a variety of community-based programs. In addition, many funds provide leadership in the implementation of statewide public awareness campaigns, convening annual conferences, or undertaking special initiatives with child abuse and neglect prevention goals.

In 1985, the Nevada Legislature took a progressive approach to curbing child abuse by establishing the Children's Trust Account to fund important programs to address this critical issue. The Committee for the Protection of Children administers these funds. The Committee is composed of volunteers who are dedicated to protecting children statewide by strengthening Nevada's families. Since 1985, the Committee

has granted over six million dollars to various community-based organizations and institutions to prevent child maltreatment.

Based on an assessment of Nevada's Child Abuse Prevention Services 2001 and the Five-Year Plan, funds have been provided to programs that support the following prevention program models that are linked to the child and family services continuum:

- Home visitation-Homemaker Program funded through Title IV-B in four rural counties
- Parenting education-funded through Title IV-B
- Public awareness
- Respite care-support of statewide 24-hour crisis hot line
- Skills-based curricula for children conducted in school classrooms with programs designed to increase knowledge about abuse, to increase resistance skills, and to encourage child abuse reporting.

The Committee for the Protection of Children and Children's Trust Fund will increase collaboration with the Title IV-B State Plan on the coordination of services statewide to improve the outcome for the safety of children.

B. Intervention and Treatment Services

1. Child Protective Services

Nevada Child Protective Services (CPS) agencies conduct activities in preventing, investigating and treating child abuse and neglect in accordance with Chapters 432 and 432B of the Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada's Regulations for the Protection from Abuse and Neglect (NAC 432B). CPS agencies respond to reports of abuse or neglect of children under the age of 18. There are three distinct agencies that provide child welfare services: State of Nevada, Division of Child and Family Services, Clark County Department of Family Services and Washoe County Department of Social Services.

Child Protective Services state and county agencies are committed to building partnerships with local providers that supply an array of services to children and their families. CPS agencies partner with schools, law enforcement, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), juvenile justice systems, community mental health providers, domestic violence programs, child death review teams and agency multidisciplinary teams. Although Nevada has an array of services that are provided either by a child welfare agency or by a contracted provider, the CFSR identified gaps in services, particularly mental health and substance abuse services. Not all services are always available in all areas of the state.

Family Preservation Services

The State provides Family Preservation Services programs which 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 six areas: Washoe County, Clark County, Carson City, Fallon, Elko and Ely. The parents, including married couples and fathers, have better supports and resources to deal with stress and crisis within the family.

Clark County

Clark County Department of Family Services, the agency responsible for the receipt and investigation of reports of child abuse and maltreatment, utilizes an array of prevention services to help children at risk remain safely with their families. Flexible funds can be used to support families in areas such as rent, utilities, apartment deposit, bus tokens, food vouchers and other basic needs. CCDFS has collaborative agreements/contracts with Bridge Counseling for assessment and counseling typically related to families with substance abuse problems, but also services those with dual diagnosis (mental health). Safe House and Safe Nest provide services to high-risk families of domestic violence. There continues to be successful collaboration where domestic violence professionals accompany CPS workers on investigations, despite the end in grant dollars to the Agassi Domestic Violence Center. Although at this time there continues to be collaboration with Safe House and Safe Nest, there is a higher need for these services. The outcomes documented where a domestic violence advocate accompanied the CPS investigator on a referral, showed a greater chance of the children remaining in the home due to this collaborative approach. Choices are accessed for families in need of substance abuse treatment. Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents (NEPEP) will assign a Family Specialist to provide information and referral, and other resource needs. CCDFS has a full-time nursing position that is paid half by the Division and half by CCDFS. There is also a TANF-funded nursing position to support the full-time nurse to teach and provide health educational services. Focus group participants commented that there were many types of parent training classes offered by, not only the county, but also numerous community agencies. In terms of promising practices, the System of Care Grant, with significant efforts to make systemic changes with training and the implementation of child and family teams, is a huge effort. Drug court is a voluntary option for families with substance abuse which is a major factor contributing to child abuse or neglect. The same judge hears the drug court and non-drug court dependency cases. This is a structured program with frequent drug-testing and treatment requirements. Cases are brought before the Court more frequently and consequences provided.

Washoe County

Washoe County Department of Social Services contracts with an array of service providers for substance abuse evaluations and testing, psychological evaluations, testing and services and independent living services (including before and aftercare case management and hard services). Additionally, each child welfare unit is allotted Special Unit Funds, which are used to assist parents in overcoming barriers that prevent them from caring for their children. Although not an exhaustive list of

services, these flexible funds can be used to purchase groceries, utilities, rental assistance, motel housing and transportation. Child Care Block Grant dollars have been significantly reduced statewide due to changes in TANF eligibility. For Washoe County that meant a reduction from \$1.4 million dollars to \$242,000. This reduction has had an impact on foster and relative care providers who relied on this childcare support. The use of Human Services Support Specialists, typically para-professionals, provide much needed in-home services working with families on life skills training, transportation and information and referral. The Smart Marriage Conference and special training sessions were attended by a Washoe County Trainer in May 2003.

Washoe County maintains an agreement with the Washoe County Health Department for public health nursing services. Social workers are able to access 88 hours per week of nursing services, 40 of which are paid for by the Department. The nurses assist assessment and permanency staff with assessments of neglect and general health and welfare regardless of the children's legal status. Additionally, the Department recently employed a full time nurse practitioner to assist assessment workers in forensic evaluations of child abuse.

Focus group participants indicated that a major strength for prevention was the information and referral services provided by the agency, the local Family Resource Centers and Kids Korner Program. Kids Korner is a collaborative outreach program between law enforcement, the medical community and the Department for at risk children and families. The participants also noted there are many free parent training classes offered in the community and WCDSS has contracts with providers for individualized parent training. In addition, there are numerous faith-based support and advocacy groups, which are used to support families.

Division Rural Region

The IV-B sub grantees are a primary source for pre-placement services for the Rural Region. The Division Intensive Family Services staff, which provide both clinical assessments and home-based family preservation services, are also a significant pre-placement service. The Carson district office has one full-time homemaker that is utilized similarly to the Human Services Specialist in Washoe County. As part of AB1, the legislation containing funding to support integration in the urban counties, the rural region received a number of new positions for "match-up" services designed to enhance the Rural Regions service delivery. To that end, three homemakers were allocated to Battle Mountain, Tonopah and Pahrump areas and additional Intensive Family Service Clinical workers were allocated for Winnemucca, Elko and Silver Springs. Recruitment and retention of these positions is an ongoing challenge.

Other Services utilized by the Rural Region include services available through other non-profit agencies, as well as Rural Mental Health Clinics, which include substance abuse counseling, domestic violence interventions, truancy, tutoring, parenting and prevention programs for children. County welfare programs are frequently accessed

for temporary housing, vouchers for clothing, food , gas, utilities and transportation. Community coalitions exist in each Rural community in an attempt to increase availability and accessibility through coordinated efforts between public and private agencies.

*** Promising Practices**

a. Family Preservation Services

The State has operated Family Preservation Services (FPS) existing in six sites throughout the state for over 10 years – Las Vegas, Elko, Fallon, Carson City, Ely and Reno. Services, like other FPS programs, are brief, intensive, home-based and family centered. A longitudinal study of FPS began in 1998 and spanned 4 years of data collection. What has emerged from the longitudinal study is a database that contains information on 488 families and 742 children. Outcomes reflect that over 90 percent of the children remain safely in their homes 12 months after FPS services are terminated. As part of the integration of child welfare services, FPS services in Washoe County are now provided by Washoe County Department of Social Services and in Clark County by Clark County Department of Family Services.

b. Washoe County In-Home Support Services

Washoe County Human Services Support Specialist (HSSS) program provides in-home support services. There are two levels of HSSS services. A HSSS II provides services to families, regardless of the children's legal status, at the direction of an assigned social worker. The objective of a HSSS II is to enhance household management skills through budgeting, parenting education, transportation etc., in conjunction with creating household stability by connecting families with community based programs (NSWD, Family Resource Centers, Medicaid etc.).

The second category is called a Senior HSSS. Although service provision is the same, the primary distinction is that a Senior HSSS is the assigned case manager. The Department involves a social worker at the onset of the case to determine the level of intervention necessary. If the family is considered to be at low to moderate risk and is willing to voluntarily participate in preventative services, a Senior HSSS is assigned. The HSSS program works with families for three to twelve months to ensure successful transition from support and assistance to self-sufficiency.

c. Clark County After Hours Unit

In July 2003, an after hours unit began operation in Clark County, providing CPS services and investigations until 10:00pm daily and all day on the weekends. This unit responds to children and families at the time of crisis. This unit provides immediate response and investigation, preventing home removal or allowing children to return home prior to waiting 24 hours to assign the case to a worker. This unit also balances the workload for the day shift investigators and allows them to prioritize and respond more efficiently to cases they are assigned. During the first two weeks of operation, over 50 investigations were initiated and 22 children were released from the Child Haven Emergency Shelter.

Statewide Survey

Of major concern is the accessibility of services to help parents in the process of reunification. Through statewide surveys during the CFSR Statewide Assessment of caseworkers, supervisors and foster parents, as well as statewide focus groups, three services were identified as “the greatest unmet service need for birth parents,” thus eliminating or prolonging their ability to reunite with their children.

The following table identifies three services which were most often noted by respondents.

<i>Service</i>	<i>Caseworker Surveys</i>	<i>Supervisor Surveys</i>	<i>Foster Parent Surveys</i>
a) Mental Health Services	22.5%	35.3%	8.8%
b) Substance Abuse Services	20.7%	17.6%	2.9%
c) Housing Services	18.9%	47.1%	No Response

Gaps in services will be addressed in the Nevada Program Improvement Plan.

2. Foster Care Services

Statewide Survey

During the focus groups conducted during the CFSR Statewide Assessment with child welfare professionals from the Division, external stakeholder groups (CASA, Mental Health) and service providers, there was unanimous agreement that accessibility to medical and mental health services is a significant barrier for birth parents and children in foster care. Focus groups statewide reported the following:

- There are long waiting lists for service providers, which cause a time lapse in receiving services to assist with the reunification process;
- There are concerns with the process of diagnosing children and families for the purpose of achieving referrals for mental health services; and
- Only children with the most serious emotional disorders are able to access treatment.

Mental Health Consortia

The 2001 Legislature via NRS 433B.333 established a Mental Health consortium in three jurisdictions: Clark County, Washoe County, and the balance of the state (Rural). The functions of the Mental Health Consortia are to assess the need for behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse) services for children in each jurisdiction, assess how well the current system is meeting this need, develop an annual plan on how the need can be better met, and report this information to the legislative committee on children and youth on a regular basis.

In the spring of 2002 all three consortia conducted a needs assessment survey of 757 professionals and family members to assess current behavioral health services and priorities. In addition, 1,457 children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems were screened using the CALOCUS to determine their level of need for behavioral health services.

A review of the plans reveals early access and counseling were rated as the highest priority needs in all three jurisdictions and accessibility to mental health services is sometimes a barrier to reunification. All three jurisdictions identified a growing need for bi-cultural and bilingual staff to meet the needs of Asian, Hispanic, and Native American families. Of the children screened only 56.1 percent are receiving mental health services at the level of their need. Although counseling was rated as the most accessible service, it was still rated as accessible for just “some” of the children who are in need. There are concerns with the limited availability of Medicaid providers due to the structure of Medicaid reimbursements, procedures and filing requirements. Medicaid requirements and procedures were seen as a barrier to accessing treatment.

The Division is currently working with its sister agency, the Department of Health Care Finance and Policy, to re-design children’s behavioral health services throughout the state in increase access and availability.

Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Services

Division regional mental health treatment services have primary responsibility for providing services to children and adolescents with severe emotional disturbance (SED), independent of their service category status. For example, regionalized mental health treatment programs provide care for SED children who enter the child welfare system and/or juvenile justice system. In addition, the Division regionalized mental health programs provide services to SED children in parental custody through community-based programs in the major metropolitan areas of Reno and Las Vegas.

Early Childhood Services

Early Childhood Services provides behavioral health services to children ages 0-6 with identified treatment needs and their families. Early Childhood Services partners with Head Start, Child Care Assistance Programs, Child Protective Services and child care centers to provide comprehensive, individualized, family-centered treatment services which support family relationships and enhance children’s mental health. Early Childhood Services programs are part of the Neighborhood Care Centers in Southern Nevada.

Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services

The Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services (MHDS) provides services to SED children and adolescents who are in rural area through the operation of its Rural Clinics satellite offices. Complementing these, the Division Intensive Family Services continues to provide crisis services, case management, and family

preservation services in rural Nevada communities. The Division's rural regional administration works closely with MHDS to provide effective children's mental health services. The two state-operated, community-based clinics, Southern Nevada Child and Adolescent Services (SNCAS) in Clark County and Northern Nevada Child and Adolescents Services (NNCAD) in Washoe County provide early childhood services, outpatient and case management services, day treatment programs, residential treatment services, and crisis residential services. In addition, school-aged children and adolescents are linked to providers offering therapeutic foster care, group care, and residential treatment and inpatient hospitalization services.

Substance Abuse Services

In addition to the substance abuse services described in Sections III and IV, Nevada has a partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse (BADA). The Division recently collaborated with BADA and received grant funding addressing the issue of juvenile delinquency and substance abuse. The grant was designed to take a comprehensive look at the substance abuse prevention and treatment services for juvenile offenders. The grant includes funding allocations for assessment, prevention, and treatment projects. One of the intents of this initial partnership with the Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Abuse is that it will create more future opportunities for collaboration and funding of ongoing assessment and treatment services in the training centers and at youth parole.

Housing Services

Focus groups conducted for the CFSR statewide assessment in Washoe, Clark County, Carson City, and Fallon listed housing services as a barrier due to the fact that housing vouchers are limited and the amount cannot meet the needs of the community. The following results were received:

- Forty-four percent of focus group participants feel that there are housing assistance services available, but they are not accessible, while an additional 29 percent see no housing assistance services in the community;
- Seventy-seven percent of participants feel that housing assistance services are of critical importance in the community. Additionally, when housing services, such as flexible funds are available they are typically limited to a one-time use or restricted to once every six-months;
- Utilities assistance services are also seen as available but not accessible (48 percent) but critically important (40 percent) in the community; and
- Twenty-nine percent of participants feel that cash assistance (monies available to assist with rental needs, utilities, groceries or other family needs) is not available in their community, but they are important (57 percent).

*** Promising Practices**

a. Drug Courts

Often issues that are brought to Family and Juvenile Courts involve substance abuse by parents or children. In Clark County, the District Court-Family Division has established drug courts to aggressively address drug issues. There is the Juvenile

Drug Court, which addresses the treatment needs of delinquent children who abuse drugs. The Dependency Drug Court addresses the needs of abusive or neglectful parents whose children are involved with the dependency court.

The Eighth District (Clark County) was the first Court in the nation to establish a juvenile drug court and a child support drug court. Drug courts are also being utilized in the First District (Carson City/Storey), Third District (Churchill/Lyon), Ninth District (Douglas)-Sierra Region; Second District-(Washoe); Fourth District (Elko)-North Central Region with a proposal to develop a drug court in the Sixth District (Humboldt/Lander/Pershing). The drug courts require the frequent oversight of participant(s) by the Judge or Court Master, frequent drug testing and clinical treatment services.

In Clark County, the District Court/Family Division has established the Dependency Drug Court, which addresses the needs of abusive or neglectful parents whose children are involved with the Dependency Court. Utilization of drug courts, which require the frequent oversight of participants of the Judge or Court Master, frequent drug testing and clinical treatment services, has proven very successful in terms of assisting numerous participants who are truly dedicated and committed in reaching their ultimate goal of overcoming drug abuse. Additionally, participants can provide information regarding their status in drug court, in cases where children have been removed from the home, and the court in the dependency case has a much better idea of whether reunification is a viable option for the family.

Washoe County's Family Drug Court seeks to ensure child safety by providing treatment and services to parents with substance abuse problems. The goal is family reunification when appropriate, but alternative permanency placement plans are used as needed. Washoe County Department of Social Services refers 100 percent of the court's cases. The Nevada State Legislature, 2nd Judicial District Court, Washoe Co. Department of Social Services, Foster Grandparents Program, various private foundations help to support a self-pay (sliding scale) program. The court has access to two programs, one of which provides a family housing facility, which includes men, with a target of transitioning families into permanent housing within approximately one year of entering the housing program. Graduated sanctions are used including community service, essays, increased treatment and urine testing, restrictions and civil contempt (up to 25 days in jail).

b. Family Peace Center Project and Other Visitation Improvement Efforts

The Family Peace Center Project is continuing in the 2nd Judicial District in Washoe County. With the initial assistance of Court Improvement Project funding, three tracks of visitations are scheduled for people from CPS, and those tracks are full all of the time. Extending hours and scheduling tracks in the evening hours have made it more convenient for families to utilize. The program is now funded by the Washoe County Department of Social Services (approximately \$49,000), and through the Safe Haven Grant that provides supervised visitation to families where domestic violence occurs.

As a result of the success in the 2nd District (Washoe), a similar effort was begun in the 9th Judicial District (Douglas) called the Safe Families Visiting Program.

c. Child Mental Health Initiative Neighborhood Care Project

SAMHSA/CMHS Child Mental Health Initiative Neighborhood Care Project is a children's mental health initiative approved and funded in FY99 in the amount of \$6.3 million dollars over a period of five years for the purpose of providing comprehensive community mental health services for children, adolescents, and their families. The SAMHSA/CMHS award enabled the Division of Child and Family Services to develop neighborhood care centers that provide a broad array of community based services for children and families. The project enhanced the existing local interagency service system for children and adolescents in Las Vegas via the development of interagency service coordination teams at neighborhood sites. Neighborhood Care Councils include representatives from families, public and private agencies that deliver child welfare, children's mental health, juvenile corrections and education services.

The mission of the Neighborhood Care Center project is to provide creative, individualized, and effective services for children and families in their communities. Services build on and draw from the strengths of the families and their neighborhood. Public and private non-profit agencies are co-located at Neighborhood Care Centers to provide a broad range of services that are accessible at a single, local center. The core values of the service system include being child centered, family focused and community based. The goal of the Division of Child and Family Services is to provide flexible and unconditional services in a true partnership with the family and community.

d. Project WIN for Children and Families - Wraparound In Nevada

The Wraparound process is a strength-based, family centered model used to improve the quality of life for youth and families who have complex needs. The model is not a program or type of service but is intended to be a unified response around a common mission that allows for youth and family participation. The use of wraparound services results in individualized planning through the support of unique community services and natural support systems.

This model was introduced to Nevada in the spring of 2002 in response to AB1 and as a support to youth in the child welfare system with complex mental health needs. The initial implementation involved a total of 33 youth with an additional 294 youth who were included in the second phase-in period. Currently, Nevada is serving approximately 327 severely emotionally disturbed (SED) youth per month.

All youth/families involved in the Project WIN have been provided wraparound support to include planning that is family-centered and done in partnership with the significant people who care about the youth/family and individualized specific to the youth/family culture, strengths, and needs. Services are provided in the least

restrictive and the most normalized environment appropriate. The focus is on keeping the youth at home or in their home communities whenever possible through a collaborative process between the people providing support and services for the youth. This results in a single coordinated approach including the strengths, needs, culture assessment and single plan of care that integrate elements of the child welfare case plan, mental health treatment plan and plan for other providers involved with the youth and that are outcome driven focusing on child safety, permanency and the well being of youth and families.

Wraparound facilitators have been hired statewide to provide services to these youth/families. The wraparound facilitators are expected to work in a collaborative partnership with child welfare caseworkers, the youth/family and all other child and family team members. This is to ensure that youth/families receive comprehensive services while minimizing duplication and management oversight for the implementation and tracking of the youth/family plan. This partnership and the model to provide services represent a new approach to providing services for youth meeting SED criteria within the general population.

3. Foster Care Licensing, Recruitment, and Training

The recruitment and training of potential Resource Families (foster care and adoption) is accomplished by a small team of professionals in each region. In the Southern Region, the Division's unit transferred to Clark County effective April 2004. Clark County's team is composed of a recruiter, a special needs adoption recruiter/trainer, a resource family trainer, a clinician, and a supervisor who is responsible for recruitment, training and licensing. Washoe County is now fully integrated and has a unit of recruiters and trainers including a special needs adoption recruiter/trainer and designated responsible supervisors. The Division's Rural Region has a small staff placed in some of the rural Division offices.

Coordination with Tribal entities and foster parents is ongoing statewide. Statewide recruitment efforts are continuous for homes for older youth.

Currently the Institute for Human Services Foster Parent Training is used for foster parent training and mirrors the training provided to the professional staff. The Spanish version of the curriculum is taught in all the regions. All of the training sessions are co-taught by current and former foster/adoptive parents with state or county professional staff. The Division State Training Specialist assists to facilitate quarterly meetings with the Recruitment and Training staff from each of the three child welfare agencies. Resources are shared, while efforts are coordinated and issues resolved. The selection of the curriculum and the addition of training resources are also discussed in this setting. The workgroup includes staff representatives from the following agencies:

- Division of Child & Family Services
- Washoe County Department of Social Services
- Clark County Department of Family Services

- University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)
- Foster Parent Associations

Potential resource families are required to complete orientation and foster parent basic training prior to licensure. According to regulations, foster parents are required to obtain a minimum of eight hours of training. Each of the child welfare licensing agencies agree that the families need additional training in order to adequately care for foster children. Training is provided statewide. The process provides an opportunity for families to obtain pertinent information to make the decision to continue to pursue licensure.

The listing below outlines the basic menu of classes that are offered:

Overview	Engaging the Family in the
Family Centered	Permanency Process
Child Protection Services	Legal Requirements
Child Development	Documentation
Separation and Loss	Major Risk Factors

Training is a critical part of the recruitment plan. The staff that implements the recruitment plan is the same staff that provides the training. Once families contact the agency, the training process is used to increase their understanding and to assist them in deciding if foster care or adoption is the right choice for their family.

Advanced Training

Licensed foster families are required to complete four hours of continuing education on an annual basis. The families achieve this through the use of books, videos, available Web-based training, Website(fosterparents.com), community based training, state and county sponsored training, seminars, workshops and conferences.

The advance training may also occur through the effort of the Nevada Training Partnership at the School of Social Work, University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and the School of Social Work, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). The trainers are either independent contractors or agency staff.

Foster parents have had the opportunity to attend UNR and UNLV's spring conference. Both universities provide a one-day conference with a national keynote speaker and breakout sessions on relevant child welfare topics.

Nevada was found to be in substantial conformity for the systemic factor of Training. A formal initial training program for all new staff child welfare workers includes a shadowing and mentoring component, requires ongoing training for staff and supervisors; and provides training for current and prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of licensed facilities that care for children. However, there are no child welfare program-specific supervisory training requirements at this time. Child welfare supervisory training will be addressed in the PIP.

*** Promising Practice**

Social Worker/Foster Parent Design Team

In Reno, the training coordinator facilitated a workgroup, or design team, in 2002 consisting of social workers and foster parents to identify those practices that encourage better collaboration and improved relationships between social workers and foster parents. It is well known that improved teamwork between social workers and foster parents results in better outcomes for foster children (either in reunifying with their families or in finding other permanent families) but such collaboration is often difficult. This design team developed a workshop to encourage improved teamwork between foster parents and social workers. This workshop is co-taught by a foster parent and social worker and is now offered to the child welfare staff and foster parents on a regular, ongoing basis. This is a beginning effort to address the teaming of foster parents and social workers.

4. Kinship Care and ICPC

The 2001 Legislature passed AB15, a kinship care bill jointly supported by the Welfare Division and DCFS. The Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) subsidized guardianship program has been operational since October 2002. In an effort to support permanency for children, the legislation allows for any specified relative over the age of 62 who is caring for a relative child and who has legal guardianship to receive TANF assistance up to the amount of the state foster care payment. They receive medical assistance through Medicaid, respite care, child care, and other services. This program does not require that the child be in the custody or care of a child welfare agency. It is open to any qualifying relative guardian. Other requirements are included to assure the safety of the child and to provide support services to the families. As mentioned in Foster Care licensing, relatives who wish to receive a foster care maintenance payment must meet the same licensing requirements as family foster care. In April 2003, 20 percent or 454 of the children in Clark County in Division custody were living with kin.

Kinship Care Study

This was the first phase of an in-depth study of kinship care in Nevada. The research was collaboration between the Division of Child and Family Services and the School of Social Work at UNLV, as well as the Kinship Care Advisory Board. Eighty kinship caregivers took part in a series of focus groups during the fall of 2003. These kinship caregivers comprised four categories: (1) relative caregiver; (2) TANF kinship caregiver; (3) non-needy caretaker; and (4) relative caregiver who does not receive a subsidy. The Kinship Care in Nevada project explores the characteristics, motivations, experiences, and needs of relative caregivers. Phase I and Phase II of the Kinship Care project included a pilot study and series of focus groups. The final phase will result in a statewide mail survey.

*** Promising Practice**

Clark County Kinship Care System of Care Grant

In October of 2003 Clark County Family Services was awarded a five-year Caring Communities Demonstration Project Grant which proposes to use Systems of Care

principles to increase placements with, and supports for, relatives when children must be removed from the home, and improving the safety, stability, timely permanency and well-being for children in kin care. Kin Care Coordinators are located at each of five community-based Neighborhood Family Service Centers. They recruit, train and sustain a culturally/linguistically diverse network of volunteer kin care mentors, with prior experience as caregivers to provide home-based support to new caregivers and will assist mentors to facilitate orientation and support groups for kin caregivers.

Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children

The Division of Child and Family Services provides statewide administration of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC) Program. Regional child welfare staff in all DCFS Field Offices as well as Clark County and Washoe County provides direct ICPC services.

Chapter 127.330 of the Nevada Revised Statutes incorporates the text of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. The Compact is a uniform law that has been enacted by all 50 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. It establishes procedures for the interstate placement of children and fixes responsibilities for those involved in placing the child(ren). The Compact Law defines the types of placements covered by the law, the persons, or agencies that must follow compact procedures, and the requirements and the protection offered by the Compact. The intent of ICPC is to ensure protection and services to children who are placed across state lines for foster care, adoption, or institutional care. Each state, including Nevada, may be the sending or receiving state. The Compact applies to four types of situations in which children may be sent from one state to another:

- Placement preliminary to an adoption;
- Placements into foster care, including foster homes, group homes, residential treatment facilities, and institutions;
- Placements with parents and relatives when a parent or relative is not making the placement; or
- Placements of adjudicated delinquents in institutions in other states.

To achieve its goal of ensuring suitable placement environments for children placed interstate, the compact:

- Requires notice and evaluations of the suitability of a placement before it is made;
- Allocates specifically the legal and administrative responsibilities during the time of the interstate placement;
- Provides a basis for enforcement of rights and responsibilities of the sending and receiving parties; and
- Authorizes joint actions of the administrators in all party states to further the effective and efficient operations and services for children in interstate

placements to ensure that their safety, well being and permanency needs are being met.

Nevada ICPC collaborates nationally with all other states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Nevada ICPC's Deputy Compact Administrator serves as the statewide point of contact and liaison with other states' compact administrators and ICPC liaisons; with other federal, state and local agencies (instate and out-of-state); and with national organizations and agencies. The Deputy Compact Administrator serves as a voting member at annual meetings of the Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children. The Deputy Compact Administrator and Alternate provide technical assistance and consultation pertaining to ICPC to Division and Department staff; staff of other federal, state and local agencies (instate and out-of-state); professionals (including attorneys, judges, court staff, physicians, and other service providers); and clients or prospective clients.

With the integration of Child Welfare Services in Clark County, the Division successfully implemented a comprehensive, statewide, automated child welfare information system, "UNITY" (Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth) on September 9, 2003. The ICPC program specialists continue to coordinate with UNITY to ensure that program functions are supported in developing the statewide ICPC data management and information system component of the SACWIS system. The 100A, 100B, and 101 (Priority home study) are currently available in UNITY. The information regarding demographics, placement resources, narratives, as well as case opening and closing dates are currently entered into UNITY and are retrievable when reviewing individual cases. ICPC successfully completed integration of incoming and supervisory services with Clark County in the Southern Region on April 1, 2004. Clark County also created and filled the new position of ICPC/ICWA Management Analyst. This position promises to provide additional technical support and data management services to the newly integrated child welfare services in Clark County. The ICPC Policy Manual was updated in Fall 2003, and accompanying training curricula was developed. Implementation of training began in November 2003. Training is an ongoing process.

ICPC will be collaborating with UNITY until the target date of October 1, 2004, to determine whether a newly acquired database from the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) will be compatible with UNITY. If the two systems are not compatible and enhancements to the UNITY system cannot be devised, ICPC plans to implement the new stand-alone database for the purposes of maintaining our own statistical data and records. Prior to this implementation, ICPC data has been manually calculated on a quarterly basis. Central office staff will continue to provide technical assistance and guidance in areas such as developing checklists, and/or providing examples of additional tools to be utilized in the field to provide more comprehensive assessments. These tools will be designed to capture comprehensive and uniform information yet allow flexibility for the regions. The

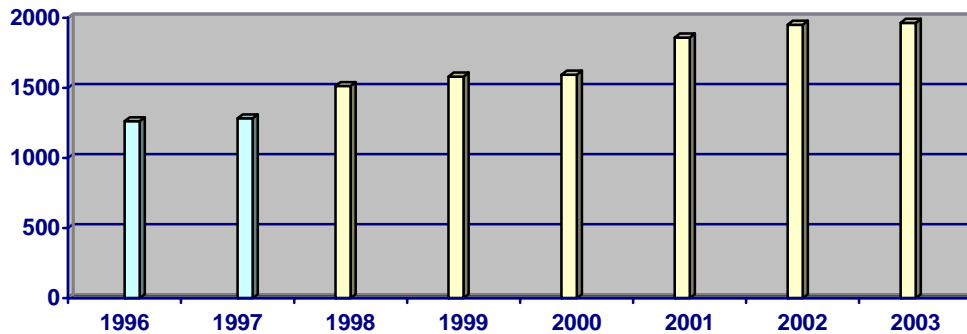
recommendations provided in the report generated by the Office of the Inspector General will be incorporated as needed and as practical.

Nevada's rapid and sustained growth has contributed to many children being referred into and out of Nevada for interstate placement. As evidenced in Chart 1, Nevada anticipates processing approximately 500 new ICPC placement requests per quarter and providing ongoing ICPC Administrative services to an open caseload of over 1800 children.

CHART 1. BREAKOUT OF TOTAL ICPC PLACEMENT REQUESTS PROCESSED BY FISCAL YEAR

FISCAL YEAR	Referrals for the placement of children sent TO Nevada	Referrals for the placement of children sent FROM Nevada	TOTAL
1996	621	642	1,263
1997	698	586	1,284
1998	786	727	1,513
1999	723	858	1,581
2000	841	754	1,595
2001	870	990	1,860
2002	1,040	911	1,951
2003	1043	922	1,965

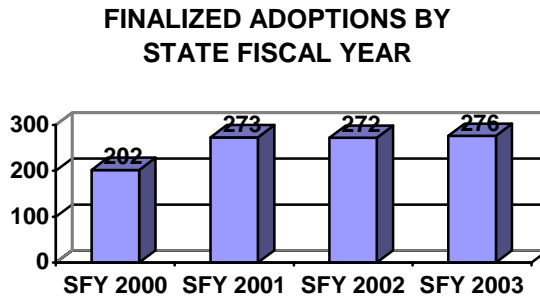
CHART 2. TOTAL ICPC PLACEMENT REQUESTS PROCESSED BY FISCAL YEAR



**CHART 3. ICPC ADOPTIONS FINALIZED BY FISCAL YEAR
(INCLUDES SPECIFIC, PUBLIC AGENCY, AND PRIVATE AGENCY ADOPTIONS)**

FISCAL YEAR	RECEIVED INTO NEVADA	SENT OUT OF NEVADA	TOTAL ICPC ADOPTIONS
FY03	106	229	335
FY02	48	87	135
FY01	45	107	152
FY00	45	118	163
FY99	94	200	294
FY98	37	141	178
FY97	18	48	66
FY96	16	39	55

CHART 4. NEVADA ICPC ADOPTIONS FINALIZED BY FISCAL YEAR



5. Guardianship

During Legislative Session 2003, State Assembly Bill 273 was passed and became effective October 1, 2003. The bill established a procedure in Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 432, Administration; Nevada Revised Statute 432B, Child Protection; and Nevada Revised Statute 159, Guardianship, that at the time of the annual permanency hearing an abused or neglected child may be permanently placed with a guardian pursuant to guardianship requirements established under NRS159. The provisions of the bill include the following:

- Adoption should still be the primary goal for children who cannot be reunified with their parents, limiting the provisions of this bill to children for whom adoption is not a realistic option.
- Termination of the Division’s custody when a guardian is appointed, but does not result in the termination of parental rights of the parent(s) of the child.

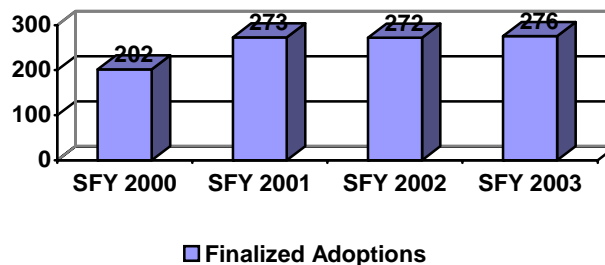
- The Court has the jurisdiction to enforce, modify, or terminate the guardianship until the child reaches the age of 18 years.
- Allows any person having a direct interest in a guardianship so established to move to enforce, modify, or terminate the guardianship.
- Allows the Court to order the Division to file a report and make recommendations in response to any motion to enforce, modify, or terminate a guardianship so established.

6. Adoption

The Division's adoption service program provides a full range of services, including children placed through private, interstate, or international adoption; relative/step-parent adoption when the court determines State agency involvement is necessary; and children in foster care. Services include pre-placement and post-placement counseling to birth parents; case management; legal services to free children for adoption; recruitment, training, home study preparation for prospective adoptive families; adoption subsidy; limited post legal adoption support; and licensing/administrative oversight to local private child placing agencies. The data in the table below reflects Nevada efforts to increase adoptions of children waiting in foster care.

CHART 6.

FINALIZED ADOPTIONS BY STATE FISCAL YEAR



A combination of funding streams, including IV-B, is used to facilitate placement services such as: 1) development of purchase of service agreements for adoptive parent training/preparation, 2) home study and 3) post placement services, particularly those involved in locating families residing in other jurisdictions.

Areas of Improvement

Information from focus groups conducted during the statewide assessment for the CFSSR and interviews with Division staff identified the following barriers to finalizing adoptions of children in foster care in Nevada:

- The Division's role (pre-placement planning services to birth parents; assessing temporary foster care placements; prospective adoptive parents; post-placement supervision and court involvement to finalize adoptions) in

providing adoption services for infant and independent adoptions reduces staff availability to serve foster children. Recent efforts by the Division (increased service fees, increased number of private agencies for infant and independent adoptions) have resulted in agencies assuming a greater role in private adoptions, permitting Division staff less time to focus on the adoptions of children in foster care and children placed through Interstate placements.

- The ability to provide Medicaid assistance to non IV-E children with adoption assistance agreements from other states is needed. Currently Nevada is one of approximately seven states that does not provide medical assistance to children with state funded adoption subsidy agreements. Reciprocating with other states would encourage other states to continue serving Nevada's non IV-E children. If that support is withdrawn, Nevada families will encounter difficulties meeting the medical, and behavioral treatment needs of adopted children when they leave the state. Given the emphasis on the inter-jurisdictional adoptions, this issue may be considered a barrier to families who would otherwise consider accepting placement of a child from Nevada with highly specialized treatment needs.
- Nevada continues to have many older children awaiting adoption. Increased effort must be placed to recruit families for the adoption of these older children.

Intercountry Adoptions

The Division is in the process of evaluating the ability of the statewide data collection system to collect and track information on the number of children adopted from other countries who are placed in State or County care due to disruption or dissolution of the adoption; information regarding the agency which handled the adoption; the reason for the disruption/dissolution; and the plans for the child. This information is now collected manually. No children have been identified as being in the custody of the state or county due to a failed intercountry adoption.

State and county agencies serve families adopting internationally. The agencies complete home studies and provide placement and post-placement services. Families requiring additional support services otherwise available to families through Title IV-B; services funded by adoption incentive funds; Title XX; Children's Mental Health; other community based service programs, etc., may be referred and receive services when eligibility requirements are met. Children adopted internationally are not categorically excluded from services.

Adoption Incentive Payments

For federal fiscal year 2003, the Division received \$28,000 in Adoption Incentive payments. A spending plan was developed by a statewide group of staff involved in the recruitment and support of adoptive parents which identified the following service needs: specialized recruitment and retention activities; purchase of service agreements to facilitate out-of-state placements; Adoption Exchange Registration

membership fees; and individual support services needed by families to prevent disruption.

AdoptUSKids

Nevada has contracted with the Adoption Exchange to meet the requirements of AdoptUSKids. All three child welfare agencies are involved in this national campaign effort. Statewide representatives attended the training held in San Francisco and the National Meeting in Washington D.C. AdoptUSKids will be coordinated with regional recruitment plans.

***Promising Practice**

Support of adoptive families by clinical staff

Better preparation of foster families expressing a desire to adopt foster children in their care is needed. Washoe Department of Social Services Adoption Program and the Clark County Child Advocacy Center have utilized 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 to better support and prepare both foster-adoption and stranger adoptions.

7. Independent Living

For the Description of Nevada's Independent Living Services - Refer to the attached Independent Living Plan (Appendix B)

Section IV. Existing Service Description

A. Services Promoting Safe and Stable Families

The primary goals of *Promoting Safe and Stable Families* (PSSF) (Title IV-B Subpart 2) are to prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families, improve the quality of care and services to children and their families, and ensure permanency for children by reuniting them with their parents, by adoption or by another permanent living arrangement. The programs include: family support, family preservation, time-limited family reunification and adoption promotion and support services.

The services are designed to help State child welfare agencies and eligible Indian tribes establish and operate integrated, preventive family preservation services and community-based family support services for families at risk or in crisis. Funds go directly to child welfare agencies and eligible Native American tribes to be used in accordance with their five-year plans. Other grant funds are set aside for nationally funded evaluation, research, and training and technical assistance projects. In addition, funds are set aside for court improvement programs.

PSSF services are based on several key principles. The welfare and safety of children and of all family members should be maintained while strengthening and preserving the family. It is advantageous for the family as a whole to receive services which identify and enhance its strengths while meeting individual and family needs. Services should be easily accessible, often delivered in the home or in community-based settings, and they should respect cultural and community differences. In addition, they should be flexible, responsive to real family needs, and linked to other supports and services outside the child welfare system. Services should involve community organizations and residents, including parents, in their design and delivery. They should be intensive enough to keep children safe and meet family needs, varying between preventive and crisis services.

Definitions of Title IV-B Subpart 2

1. Family Support (Prevention and Support Services) is defined as: Community-based services which promote the well-being of children and families and are designed to increase the strength and stability of families (including adoptive, foster, and extended families), to increase parents' confidence and competence in their parenting abilities, to afford children a stable and supportive family environment, and to enhance child development. These services may include respite care for parents and other caregivers; early developmental screening of children to assess the needs of these children and assistance in obtaining specific services to meet their needs; mentoring, tutoring, and health education for youth; a range of center-based activities (informal interactions in drop-in centers, parent support groups); services designed to increase parenting skills; counseling and home-visiting activities.

2. Family Preservation is defined as:
 - Crisis Intervention: Services for children and families designed to help families (including adoptive and extended families) at-risk or in crisis;
 - Placement Prevention: Services to prevent family disruption and unnecessary removal of children from their homes (as appropriate). These services may include intensive family preservation, post-adoption support services, case management, counseling, day care, respite services, homemaker services, services designed to increase parenting skills, family budgeting, coping with stress, health, and nutrition;
 - Reunification Services: Services to help children, where appropriate, return to families from which they have been removed or to be placed for adoption or legal guardianship. These services may include day care services, homemaker or caretaker services, family or individual counseling for parent(s) and child, follow-up care to families to whom a child has been returned after placement and other reunification services the State identifies and necessary.
3. Time-Limited Family Reunification Services are defined as: Services and activities that are provided to a child that is removed from the child's home and placed in a foster family home or a child care institution and to the parent or primary caregiver of such a child, in order to facilitate the reunification of the child safely and appropriately within a timely fashion, but only during the 15-month period that begins on the date that the child, pursuant to section 475 (5)(F), is considered to have entered foster care. The services and activities are the following:
 - Individual, group, and family counseling;
 - Inpatient residential, or outpatient substance abuse treatment services;
 - Mental health services;
 - Assistance to address domestic violence;
 - Services designed to provide temporary child care and therapeutic services for families, including crisis nurseries; and
 - Transportation to or from any of the services and activities described above.
4. Adoption Promotion and Support Services are defined as: Services and activities designed to encourage more adoptions out of the foster care system, when adoptions promote the best interests of children, including such activities as pre- and post-adoptive services and activities designed to expedite the adoption process and support adoptive families.

Title IV-B Subpart 2 Grantees by Funding Category and Region

Grantee Name and Region	Family Support	Family Preservation	Time-Limited Family Reunification	Adoption Promotion/Support
<i>Clark</i>				
Bridge Counseling			X	
Diligent Search Center, Las Vegas			X	
Easter Seals, Las Vegas	X			
Family Counseling Services, Reno			X	
Nevada Children’s Center, Home-Based Services, Las Vegas		X		
Nevada Children’s Center, Adoption, Las Vegas				X
Virgin Valley FRC, Mesquite	X			
Women’s Development Center, LV	X	X		
<i>Washoe</i>				
Children’s Cabinet, Incline Village	X			
Family Counseling Services, Reno		X		
Sierra Association of Foster Families, Advocacy, Reno	X			
Sierra Association of Foster Families, Respite, Reno	X			
STEP 2, Reno		X		
Washoe Co. FRC Coalition, Reno	X	X		
<i>Rural</i>				
FRC of Northeastern Nevada, Elko	X	X	X	
FRIENDS FRC, Fallon		X		
Hawthorne FRC, Hawthorne	X			
Pahrump FRC, Pahrump	X	X		
Ron Wood FRC, Carson City	X	X		
Wells FRC, Wells	X			
Wells FRC, Wells	X			

Summary of services provided in the Northern Region (Washoe County)

- 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;
- Respite care for families (including foster families);
- Services to Spanish-speaking families;
- Washoe County's Child Protective Services (CPS) Family Assessment;
- Services, including assessments, case management and supportive services;
- Rental assistance;
- Family counseling/therapy (bilingual, home- or center-based);
- Parenting skills training;
- Support groups ;
- Prevention/ education services ; and
- 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.

Summary of services provided in the Rural Region (all counties except Washoe and Clark)

- Family Assessment Services (formerly CPS Differential Response Services) to families referred to Title IV-B Funded community-based programs by Division;
- Child Protective Services (CPS). FASS services include family preservation services, including family assessment and case management;
- Housing and services for homeless families;
- Parenting skills training;
- Marriage and family therapy;
- Basic education;
- Job skill training ;
- Budget counseling;
- Basic needs of children including food, clothing and personal items;
- Dental and medical care;
- Family activity evenings;
- Support groups;
- Family visitation; and
- Rural Homemaker Services.

Summary of services provided in the Southern Region (Clark County):

- 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;
- Home-based homemaker services (such as life-skills, financial skills, nutrition, hygiene) for families at-risk;
- 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.

Gaps in Services

The most notable gaps in service are Adoption Promotion and Support. The State is challenged with a lack of qualified providers to provide needed adoption support services. Findings from the CF SR indicated the three greatest barriers to reunification are mental health and substance abuse services and housing services. Funding criteria will be reviewed to address service gaps. All three regions also identified the following service needs to be addressed in the PIP:

- A growing need for bicultural and bilingual staff to meet the needs of Asian, Hispanic, and Native American families;
- A need for mental health services that meet children's needs (a state survey noted that of the children screened, only 56.1% were receiving mental health services at the level of their need); and
- A need for Medicaid providers.

Evaluation of Sub-grantees

The Senator Alan Bible Center for Applied Research has been working with sub-grantees to develop and report on measurable outcome goals. This year the Center developed a secure web system that allows users to enter monthly reports into a database electronically. The grantees are at different places in goal development and tracking due to the diverse nature of services they provide and varying degrees of organizational structure. See Appendix E for the complete Evaluation Report.

B. Estimated Expenditures for above Services

Based upon previous annual expenditures it is anticipated that approximately \$259,000 will be available for each of the service areas. Services will be provided in the four areas under the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program: Family Preservation, Family Support, Time-Limited Family Reunification, and Adoption Promotion and Support Services keeping within the required federal expenditure guidelines.

C. Decision Making Process

Twenty-one (21) community-based providers are funded through out the state. The Title IV-B Steering Committee has served as the advisory body for the Nevada Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program. Members of the committee represent state and county agencies, and community organizations serving children and families. Currently, the committee provides advice and makes recommendations to the Division of Child and Family Services regarding child welfare programs and services. Members of the committee served as proposal reviewers during the grant funding process. The IV-B Steering Committee will evolve into a statewide advisory committee with broader representation. In addition, to providing input into the CFSP, committee members will have the opportunity to participate in other Division initiatives.

ICWA - Coordination with Tribes

The Division of Child and Family Services coordinates and consults with four main tribal entities: Northern Paiute Tribe, Southern Paiute Tribe, Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, and Shoshone Tribe. There are a total of 26 federally recognized tribal entities in Nevada that include bands, colonies and reservations and two urban Indian organizations, the Las Vegas Indian Center and Nevada Urban Indians, Inc. These tribal entities work together with the Division and counties through the Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee that was developed to assure compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act.

The committee's membership consists of representatives from the Nevada Indian Child Welfare Association, Inter-tribal Council of Nevada, 26 Nevada Tribal Social Service agencies, Bureau of Indian Affairs – Western and Eastern Regional Offices, Nevada Urban Indians, Inc., Las Vegas Indian Center, Nevada Indian Commission, Nevada Division of Child and Family Services, University of Nevada Training Partnership, Clark County Department of Family Services, Washoe County Department of Social Services and community-based service agencies, such as Stepping Stones Tribal Emergency Shelter.

The Steering Committee has been collaborating to improve the provision of child welfare services and protections under section 422(b)(10) of the Act to Indian children under both State and Tribal jurisdiction. There are no formal arrangements currently made with the tribes for the provision of child welfare services to Indian children under both State and Tribal jurisdiction.

To address this issue, the Steering Committee started to work on the Indian Child Welfare Best Practice Guidelines: "Initiating the Contact and Referral Between Child Welfare Agencies and Tribal Social Service Agencies" in January of 2004. This draft will be jointly developed by the Division and representatives of the Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee by December 31, 2005 to cover the how-to process of making service referrals to agencies for non-tribal or ineligible children living on an Indian reservation, the process for contact and service delivery on the Indian reservation and other procedures necessary for the provision of services. Non-tribal or ineligible children living on an Indian Reservation are those children who are not tribal members of that Indian reservation, but live on the Indian Reservation and are not eligible for services from that tribal entity but may be eligible for services from the State or county social service agencies.

The Nevada Revised Statutes has embodied the provisions of the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act in several subsections of the State law. These requirements are contained in the case compliance review and will be consolidated into the quality assurance review tool that will incorporate key elements of the CF SR review instrument. The case compliance review instrument has been provided to the tribal entities on the Indian Child Welfare Act and a matrix was jointly developed on jurisdictional issues relative to the State of Nevada in October 2003 and finalized in January 2004. The specific measures the Division uses to comply with the Indian

Child Welfare Act are through case compliance/quality assurance review and training. The Division will accomplish this through the development of a quality assurance instrument containing the ICWA elements.

The Nevada Children's Justice Act Task Force has published the "Indian Child Welfare Resource Guide for Nevada" that was jointly developed by the members of the Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee in 2002 and finalized in 2003. This publication was designed to assist State and county child welfare agencies on the law and contacts within Nevada Tribes. The publication is a resource guide.

Tribes have been invited to participate on the Child Welfare Steering Committee, Title IV-B Steering Committee, State planning activities and in Division training. The mutual goal has been to improve services for all children. The Division will continue to collaborate and coordinate with the Nevada Tribes and Tribal entities on improving the child welfare system through the Indian Child Welfare Steering Committee. The committee will develop an action plan outlining coordination between the State/county and tribes to identify and implement best practice standards on arrangements for appropriate referrals and provision of child welfare services for Indian children by June 30, 2005.

Section V. Evaluation and Technical Assistance

National Resource Centers for Child Welfare

From the very beginning of this process, the National Resource Centers for Child Welfare have been providing guidance and technical assistance as follows:

- National Resource Center for Information and Technology in Child Welfare assisted in identifying the data that helped create the data profile for the CFSR;
- National Child Welfare Resource Center for Organizational Improvement provided technical assistance in developing a strategic planning process that incorporates the Program Improvement Plan into the Five Year Master Plan;
- National Resource Center for Child Welfare Training and Evaluation is assisting in developing a state training plan that would better support Nevada's PIP and Master Plan;
- National Resource Center for Youth Development provided technical assistance for issues relating to independent living services; and
- National Resource Center for Child Maltreatment provided technical assistance in the area of child abuse and neglect.

Nevada will continue to utilize technical assistance from the various NRCCW in order to support the 5-year state plan, the PIP planning process and subsequent implementation.

With the collaboration of the County Child Welfare Directors, the DCFS Administrator will oversee the plans and develop strategies for compliance and program improvement based on quantifiable and qualitative data.

The Senator Allen Bible Center for Applied Research will continue to serve as the evaluator for IV-B sub-grantees. The report for 2003 was submitted with the Fifth Annual Progress and Service Report for FFY 04.

Section VI. CERTIFICATIONS AND ASSURANCES

- Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan: Assurances
- State Chief Executive Officer's Certifications for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
- State Chief Executive Officer's Certification for the Education and Training Voucher Program, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
- State Chief Executive Officer's Assurance Statement for The Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan
- CFS-101, Part II Annual Summary of Child and Family Services

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT ACT CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES STATE PLAN FFY 2004-2009

Desired Outcome: The incidence of child abuse and neglect will be reduced and the outcomes for safety, permanency and well-being of children in Nevada will be improved.

The State of Nevada Division of Child and Family Services actively supports the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, and Children's Bureau, child welfare outcomes. The national goals of safety, permanency, and child well being are the foundation for the development of systemic and outcome measures aimed at improving the lives of children who are exposed to child abuse and neglect. The child welfare outcomes required from states pursuant to section 479(a) of the Social Security Act as amended by section 203(a) of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997, include the quantitative data provided by the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS), Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), and the qualitative information from the Child and Family Service Review (CSFR).

The purposes of safety outcome measures are to assess the effectiveness of an agency's child welfare system in protecting children from abuse or neglect in their own homes and in foster care. This reflects those actions taken by public agencies and their partners to create safety for children who have experienced or are "at-risk" of experiencing abuse, neglect or emotional maltreatment from the action or inaction of their parents or caretakers. An indication that the child protection system may be achieving the objective of child safety is through the quantitative measure of the reduction of the rate or incidence of recurrence of maltreatment. How the incidence rate is reduced is indicative of the qualitative performance measures that are the mechanisms an agency employs to respond to child abuse and neglect.

The State of Nevada supports the child welfare outcome goals through NCANDS and AFCARS data collection by the Unified Nevada Information Technology for Youth (UNITY), a State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS), and through program performance measures outlined by the CSFR. The following includes the background of the child protection system and organization in Nevada, safety outcomes and indicators, the child protection goals and objectives, and related program activities that form the basis for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) State Plan for FFY 2004 – 2009.

BACKGROUND AND ORGANIZATION

The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services is the agency responsible for planning, coordinating and monitoring child protective services provided throughout

the state; coordinating its activities with and assisting the efforts of law enforcement agencies, the courts, and public and private organizations which provide social services for the prevention, identification and treatment of abuse or neglect of children; and involving communities in the improvement of protective services. The Nevada Division of Child and Family Services is responsible for adopting regulations that establish reasonable and uniform standards for protective services provided in the state.

Provision of child protective services in Nevada is a combination of State and County administered agencies. Child Protective Services is part of the child welfare service system (Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 432B.044). Counties in which the “population is 100,000 or more shall provide child welfare services for the children in that county and pay the cost of all those services (NRS 432B.325).” Clark County in Southern Nevada and Washoe County in Northern Nevada are the two counties that meet this standard. The Division administers the child welfare program for the remaining fifteen (15) rural counties. The agencies that provide protective services are: State of Nevada Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Clark County Department of Family Services (CCDFS), and Washoe County Department of Social Services (WCDSS).

NEVADA CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL

The Nevada Citizen Review Panel was established in 1999 and is maintained by the CAPTA grant. The panel submits an annual report on the progress that the Child Protective Services agencies are making with respect to protecting children. The panel conducts case reviews, policy and practice reviews and makes recommendations for improving the child protection system. The panel produces an annual report that is submitted with the Child and Family Services Annual Progress Report.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES STATEWIDE TEAM

The Division of Child and Family Services, Clark County Department of Family Services and Washoe County Department of Social Services work together in developing and evaluating standardized policies and procedures, investigative practice, including safety and risk assessment, intake, case management and service delivery in child protection that will improve the system. The CPS Statewide Team provides information and participates in related activities of the Nevada Child Protective Services Citizen Review Panel and the Nevada Children’s Justice Task Force. The team is supported by the CAPTA grant.

CAPTA STATE PLAN GOALS

The goals and objectives of CAPTA are found in Section V of the State Plan. These goals are directed at improving the safety, permanency and well-being of children.

CAPTA: SAFETY OUTCOME - DATA

Description: The safety outcome measures are directed at the reduction of recurrence of child abuse and neglect for those reports of children that have been substantiated including children in foster care. The reduction of the rate of recurrence of maltreatment is an indication that the child protection system may be achieving the objective of child safety. This information is provided by the UNITY-SACWIS computer system.

The goal is to provide a baseline for future data comparison that will reflect the recurrence and incidence of child abuse. Please refer to Section I, Outcome I.

Data Definition: This data will be collected from the UNITY/SACWIS computer system that should be fully operational by 2004. It may require a year to establish a statewide baseline of child specific data for comparative purposes. The data for Measure 1.1 will reflect recidivism rates for children who have had a substantiated report within six months prior to the date of the current report. The data for Measure 2.2 will reflect the incidence of abuse in foster care settings. The data should be available by the end of 2004 or early 2005.

The information obtained from these data may be an indication of how well the system addresses the needs and safety concerns of children.

CAPTA SAFETY OUTCOME – PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

Description: The CAPTA State Plan adopts the safety outcome measures that are linked to program performance. These measures tell about how well the program is meeting its requirements to provide safety to children. Each measure is taken from the Federal Child Welfare Outcomes standard and is found in Section V. Vision, Principles, Goals and Objectives, safety outcomes 1 and 2, objectives and action steps of the comprehensive State Plan.

The CAPTA areas selected for improvement are:

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

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

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

CAPTA funds will be used to improve outcomes for the safety and permanency outcomes through the review, evaluation and development of consistent statewide statute/regulation, policy, protocols, and practice for the intake, risk, safety

assessment, screening, decision-making, investigation of reports and referral processes for child abuse and neglect. These safety outcomes, objectives and action steps are found in Section V of the Comprehensive Five-Year Child and Family Services State Plan.

CAPTA TRAINING

CAPTA funds will be used to support training to improve outcomes for the safety, permanency and well-being of children (Sec.106 (a)(1)-(8)). Training activities are included in the training section of the Child and Family Services Plan. There is no significant difference from the activities described in the previous State plan except there will be more emphasis on improving those areas identified by the Child and Family Services Review in the Program Improvement Plan.

Description of services and training to be provided under the CAPTA State Grant as per section 106(b)(2)(C) CAPTA

(i) 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.

(ii) Training:

Training will be provided to support direct line and supervisory personnel on child abuse and neglect in the areas of: intake and investigation, screening, safety and risk assessment, use of instruments, 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 Training Partnership.

The CAPTA State Grant will provide 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.

(iii) Training for Individuals Required to Report Suspected Cases of Child Abuse and Neglect:

Mandated reporter training is provided on an ongoing basis. Training is provided free to child welfare and other participants through collaboration with the Nevada Training Partnership. The CAPTA Basic State Grant will provide support for presenters, travel and per diem and materials expense (videos) and will provide support for staff travel and per diem to attend the training.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO BE ASSISTED WITH CAPTA BASIC STATE GRANT FUNDS FFY 05

The following are necessary to carry out the objectives of the grant:

Personnel, Operations, and Maintenance

Personnel: Through the use of CAPTA State Grant funds, the Division of Child and Family Services will employ a full-time Child Protective Services - Social Welfare Programs Specialist. The funds requested include salary, fringe benefits and travel.

Under the direction of the Division's designated Deputy Administrator, the Child Protective Services Specialist will coordinate with the Division's rural district offices, Washoe and Clark Counties to help insure that policy and practice in child protection are consistent throughout Nevada. The Specialist will participate in planning, coordinating and evaluating child protective services provided throughout the state.

The Specialist will also participate 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.) serve as the State Liaison Officer with the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect; 5.) prepare grant applications and progress reports for the CAPTA Basic State Grant program and other related CAPTA funding; 6.) develop, coordinate and monitor CAPTA Projects; 7.) serve on agency or other committees that promote the goals of child protective services; and 8.) monitor the collection of child abuse data for the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and prepare the annual State Statistical Report on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Operating Expenses

Communications equipment purchased for the purposes of promoting staff and child safety will be periodically reviewed for continued maintenance and possible upgrade through the use of grant funds. This equipment provides social workers in remote areas with the ability to communicate with supervisory and or law enforcement personnel to insure the safety of children and child protective service staff.

Grant funds will be used to purchase equipment, such as digital recorder, printers, computers and necessary hardware, software upgrades, file cabinets and other office equipment and work materials such as journals, subscriptions, books, and videos.

Maintenance of the Child Protective Services Statewide Team and Citizen Review Panel

Child Protective Services Statewide Team: Grant funds will be used to support travel and per diem for a representative from Clark and Washoe Counties and the Division of Child and Family Services.

Child Protective Services Citizen Review Panel: Grant funds will be used to support travel and per diem for representatives on the panel. Funds may also be used for a consultant/facilitator, including travel and per diem and materials, to provide technical assistance and assist with coordination for the panel.

Child Welfare Training

Grant funds will support the mandatory Statewide Training for child welfare staff through provision of per diem and travel costs. Funds will be used to improve the child welfare curriculum and to provide educators and trainers to develop and/or present training throughout the state of Nevada through contract /sub-grant.

Training for child welfare staff and related disciplines will be supported by grant funds in the use of comprehensive safety assessment instruments and practice, risk assessment, case planning, the handling of child abuse and neglect cases involving domestic violence and substance abuse, case management, investigating children with disabilities and other relevant identified training. Grant funds will support the development of on-going training curriculum for child abuse investigations, training, and materials for mandated reporters.

Grant funds will support training through the provision of equipment and materials, such as television/VCR, videos, books and other resource materials.

APPENDIX B

CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENT LIVING PROGRAM (CFCIP)

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Goal and Eligibility

The goal of Nevada's Independent Living Program is to provide children making the transition from placement to independence with the skills and resources necessary to make them independent and productive members of society.

The Division of Child and Family Services is responsible for the oversight of all independent living programs in Nevada. The oversight responsibility is assigned to the statewide independent living coordinator at the Division Central Office. 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, comprising the 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 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 independent living partners will cooperate with the national evaluations of the effects of independent living programs in achieving the purposes of the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program.

Nevada's Independent Living Program is a set of services available to all foster youth between the ages of 15.5 until the age of 21. The Division considers all eligible foster youth to include those youth who are in the care and custody of the Division, Washoe County Department of Social Services, or Clark County Department of Family Services. The Division considers foster care to be the legal status of the child. The physical placement of the child does not determine the eligibility for independent living services. Independent living services may continue with the child after permanency has been achieved, depending on the needs of the child. Nevada will also extend independent living services to eligible youth who have relocated to Nevada from another state.

Federal independent living funding is provided to all county and state programs to provide independent living services, expand existing services, and to establish new services to eligible children. Federal funds are combined with existing state funds to provide independent living services to eligible foster youth and former foster youth transitioning to independence. State funds through the Assistance to Former Foster Youth Program 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.

In 2000, the Nevada State Legislature passed legislation creating the Assistance for Former Foster Youth fund by taxing the copying of real estate filing transactions throughout the state. This fund, provided by AB94, was specifically created to provide the necessary goods and services to Nevada youth who have aged out of the foster care system until the youth reached the age of 21. Goods and services allowable to youth include, but are not limited to job training, housing assistance, case management, and medical insurance. The legislation directs the State to limit the administrative costs of the fund to 10% or less. The Legislative Council Bureau, with the concurrence of the Office of the Attorney General, determined that the fund could also be used to assist youth who are currently in the care and custody of the state with their transition to independence. During the Child and Family Services Review in February 2004, Nevada was commended for the creation of this fund, and the fund was noted as a promising practice in Nevada.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Nevada makes available federal and state funds to support IL services to support existing programs as well and encourage the development of new programs. Nevada will continue to encourage the counties and Rural Region to out-source its programs through private vendors to fully develop the array of services necessary for their region.

Funds for the Independent Living Program are distributed from the state to the counties and to the Rural Region to support independent living program development and activities. In Clark County, Chafee funds are currently distributed through the state to the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Program for eligible youth who are in care. The Cooperative Extension Program has a network of Chafee partners within the private non-profit and profit sector to compliment their array of independent living services. In addition, state funds are combined with the Chafee funds for youth who have left placement and are contracted through Clark County Department of Family Services to the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth. In Washoe County, all Chafee and state funds are routed through Washoe County Department of Social Services to the Children's Cabinet of Washoe County to provide independent living services to eligible youth who are in care and to those youth who have left placement. The Rural Region of DCFS routes both federal and state funds through JOIN (Job Opportunities in Nevada), a WIA (Workforce Incentive Act) provider for all independent living program activities for youth in care, and to those youth who have left placement. The Rural Region routes additional Chafee funds for stipends to youth in care through a IV-B Family Resource Center. Nevada distributes independent living funds to tribal youth through the Fallon Paiute- Shoshone Tribal Stepping Stones Shelter. (see Attachment, Figure 1, Statewide Programs and Distribution of Funds)

Program Activities for Youth in Care

Federal independent living funds may be used by Washoe County, Clark County and the Rural Region to support a wide variety of activities for youth in placement that meet the eligibility requirements for the Chafee Foster Care Independent Living Program.

The State provides guidance to Washoe County, Clark County and to the Rural Region, and makes available technical assistance regarding the access of the spectrum of independent living services as follows:

1. Individualized assessment of the independent living needs of eligible foster youth and the development of independent living case plans based on the results of the assessment.
2. Individualized assessment is to include the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment.
3. Life book/portfolio for each youth is developed.
4. Classroom teaching and experiential learning programs in daily living skills, life skills, self-management, interpersonal relationships, career planning, locating and maintaining housing, etc.
5. Direct stipends.
6. Financial assistance for legal guardianships.
7. Job training, placement, job coaching, and follow-up services.
8. Assistance in obtaining higher education and vocational training, including technical assistance, financial assistance and financial aid counseling.
9. Preparation for GED completion.
10. Preparation for high school graduation, high school support and retention, and drop-out prevention.
11. Programs directed at improving self-esteem and self-confidence e.g., retreats, youth conferences and workshops, youth leadership events, group and individual counseling.
12. Programs to provide support and parenting education to assist teen parents, including teen fathers.
13. Programs to provide support for youth transitioning from foster care.
14. Purchase of books, audiovisual materials and equipment, and other resources to be used in providing life skills and other training to youth in the program.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH AND YOUTH IN TRANSITION

Nevada incorporates the use of state funds specified for former foster youth between the ages of 18-21 who meet the eligibility requirements with the federal independent living funds and routes the funds to Washoe County, Clark County and the Rural Region for program development and service delivery.

Nevada recognizes that safe and stable housing for all former foster youth is key to providing permanence to youth. Nevada uses both federal and state money to provide for room and board for former foster youth.

Nevada defines room and board as those expenses incurred by the youth for rent, utilities, deposits, and food after exiting care. These services are provided to youth who are no longer eligible to receive IV-E payment and are available until the youth turns 21 years old.

The following program activities are provided:

1. Support youth in transition to independence with specialized case management.
2. Support youth in transition to independence with individual stipends to assist with transition, e.g., security deposits, utility deposits, application fees, rental deposits, etc.
3. Post-secondary education workshops.
4. Case management to track youth and provide outreach.
5. Case management providing referrals to community and governmental agencies to provide for the youth's needs, e.g., health care, dental care, counseling, mental health, substance abuse counseling, family planning, housing, social security benefits, welfare benefits, etc.
6. Financial assistance for housing and utilities.
7. Financial assistance for medical, pharmacy, dental, and vision services not covered by insurance or existing social service programs.
8. Financial assistance for basic needs e.g., food, clothing, furniture, household items, etc.
9. Financial assistance for transportation, including assistance for public transportation, assistance with purchasing a vehicle, and drivers education.
10. Education and training in basic life skills such as daily living, self-management, interpersonal relationships, etc.
11. Assistance for teen parents, including teen fathers, e.g., parenting classes, assistance with cost of childcare, referrals to community support agencies.
12. Assistance with obtaining essential documents e.g., social security card, birth certificate, work permits, identification cards, passports, etc.
13. Financial assistance to pay for fees associated with essential documents.
14. Legal assistance.
15. GED preparation and testing.

STATEWIDE TRAINING ACTIVITIES

DCFS provides training and technical assistance throughout the state, and individualizes training to each region, specific to that region's service array. Printed material is developed and distributed statewide.

The following training activities are available:

1. Training of staff and supervisors statewide regarding the array of IL services and access to services in their geographic region.

2. Technical assistance offered to all IL providers regarding quality assurance and program implementation.
3. Training of staff, supervisors, administrative personnel, care providers and youth in Clark County by the National Resource Center for Youth Services.

COLLABORATIONS THROUGH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

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 independent living partners from all regions, including tribal representation and independent living youth, contributed to the development of the statewide CFSP process.

Clark County combines the resources available through the Division and the Clark County Department of Family Services for their independent living partnerships. Chafee IL funds are currently sent from the Division to the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Program who broadens its scope of services by contracting with the Center for Independent Living, the CASA Foundation, the Business Connection (a private company), and Nevada Educational Consultants (a private company). Clark County Department of Family Services is responsible for the management of the state funds for former foster youth, and contracts with a private nonprofit, the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth, to provide the spectrum of aftercare and transitional services to youth. An independent living oversight committee meets monthly in Clark County to review independent living 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 Director of the Clark County Department of Family Services and comprised of representatives from public and private stakeholders, including the court, youth, former foster youth, and foster parents.

Washoe County Department of Social Services contracts with the Children's Cabinet, a private, nonprofit agency and is also a IV-B provider. Washoe County uses the Children's Cabinet for the full array of IL services for youth in care and for former foster youth by combining the federal and state independent living funds.

The DCFS Rural Region has partnered with JOIN (Job Opportunities in Nevada), a WIA (Workforce Investment Act) provider for services to youth in care and for former foster youth by combining the federal and state independent living funds. In addition, the Rural Region places Chafee funds at the Ron Wood Family Resource Center, a IV-B provider, to assist foster youth with stipends to meet personal needs.

The Division has partnered with the Tribal Stepping Stones Shelter in Fallon, Nevada to receive Chafee funds for Native American Youth. Stepping Stones was designated to be the Chafee recipient by the Nevada tribal entities after lengthy

consultation and deliberation. The Stepping Stones Shelter is on the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation.

TRIBAL EFFORTS

Nevada regularly meets with tribal representatives through the Indian Child Welfare Association. This meeting is a forum for state and tribal representatives to discuss issues relating to child welfare and the implementation of program efforts mutual to both parties. The meetings are scheduled through the association and the meetings are held at various tribal locations. The tribal representatives and representatives from the Division Central Office staff jointly facilitate the meetings.

During these meeting, independent living information and updates are provided to participants. This tribal association, in partnership with the state, determined that the independent living needs of tribal youth would best be met through their tribal shelter, Stepping Stones. Stepping Stones serves Native youth from all of the Nevada tribes. Nevada has encouraged its tribal partners to review its youth who have exited from care to determine if services can be expanded. Nevada has reserved state funds for the tribes to access for this purpose.

Nevada increased its Chafee funding to the Stepping Stones Shelter in 2003 in order that the program could be expanded, and the funds could assist the shelter in supporting its administrative infrastructure and staff development.

STATUTORY/ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS CHALLENGES

Legislation was not passed by the Nevada Legislature in 2002 that would allow Nevada to expand its Medicaid option to include youth ages 18-20 years old who have aged out of the foster care system. Advocacy groups within the state have indicated that they will propose reintroduction of this legislation in the 2005 legislative session.

Nevada will request legislative review and modification of the law that provides state funds to former foster youth in order to clarify in statute that youth transitioning from care are eligible for these state funds.

The integration of child welfare services is finalized on October 1, 2004 when the final transfer to Clark County Department of Family Services occurs. This transfer will provide better coordination and communication regarding independent living services in Clark County and will unify all programs under the management and supervision of one agency.

Lack of systemic statewide training for staff, supervisors, and care providers in the concepts of independent living, independent living resources and youth development has created fragmentation in the service delivery system, and caused youth to be underserved or not served at all.

Systemic statewide training for child welfare staff and supervisors and undeveloped policies and procedures regarding permanency planning for older youth has resulted in the lack of permanency and comprehensive transitional planning for youth.

Memorandum of Understanding between the Division and the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services (MH/DS) to assure transition of youth to adult services has not been optimally utilized.

Independent living service array has not been fully developed and implemented statewide to address transitional living options, medical services, mentoring, and necessary skill develop for youth to achieve independence.

PLANNING NEEDS

1. Statewide Plan

Statewide planning for independent living was initiated in April 2004. Stakeholders from around the state were invited to participate in the planning process. Participants included representatives from youth, tribes, and independent living providers. The work group focused on improving permanency outcomes for older foster youth and youth likely to remain in care until they age out of the foster care system.

The Division will plan a statewide meeting of independent living stakeholders within six months to further define the direction of the program. Items to be addressed are to include youth eligibility, eligibility of juvenile corrections youth, expanding the scope of program, statewide youth advisory board, enhanced coordination of services, planning for youth in transition, parenting youth, identification of service strengths and barriers, and comments/concerns regarding existing and future services.

2. Youth Development

Technical assistance and support will be given to Washoe County, Clark County and the Rural Region to develop and implement functional youth advisory boards:

- A statewide youth conference will be planned within six months;
- A statewide youth advisory board as a result of the youth conference; and
- Youth leaders throughout the state will be identified to attend the Casey Family Programs youth conference in Sacramento, California in October 2004.

3. Policy and Procedure

Nevada will review and amend existing policies and procedures and develop new policies and procedures, where indicated, related to eligibility of youth for services, case planning, permanency, and youth transitioning from care, and will make necessary changes to better reflect needs of older foster youth.

Nevada will develop policies and procedures regarding permanency planning for older youth, especially those youth identified as APPLA (Any Planned Permanent Living Arrangement). The development of the policies and procedures are a direct result of the statewide planning initiated in April 2004 that focused on improving permanency outcomes for former foster youth. Diligent search efforts will be expanded at the time the APPLA is ordered. Caseworkers and supervisors will be trained as to the process for conducting a diligent search with an older youth. The diligent search must include the youth's input to identify all significant relationships, including family, relationships, friends, partners, mentors, and former caretakers. The following will be implemented:

- Policies and procedures will be developed to assure that case plans are individualized and youth driven;
- Policies and procedures will be developed to support youth who are parents to assure the contact and engagement of the other parent; and
- Policies and procedures will be initiated to develop and maintain Youth Advisory Boards.

Nevada will refine Memorandum of Understanding and protocol between the Division and Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services (MHDS) to improve access and transition to MHDS.

4. Training Needs

The Division recognizes the need for continuous training and technical assistance as follows:

- Nevada will continue to utilize training and technical assistance from the national resource centers for development and implementation of independent living programs statewide;
- Nevada will collaborate with foster care training, recruitment, and licensing to develop an independent living training module for new foster parents;
- Nevada will include independent living foster youth to assist in the training of new foster parents;
- Nevada will provide statewide training to existing foster parents and care providers regarding independent living services and resources;
- Nevada will develop training for staff and supervisors regarding the identification of significant connections for youth and how to perform diligent search;
- Nevada will 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;
- Nevada will provide training to enhance the coordination between IDEA and independent living planning; and

- Nevada will continue to provide statewide training to all workers, supervisors, independent living partners and stakeholders regarding independent living, and access to services.

Attachment, Figure 1. **STATEWIDE PROGRAMS AND DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS**

	CLARK COUNTY	WASHOE COUNTY	RURAL REGION OF DCFS	TRIBAL SHELTER
CHAFEE FUNDS	University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Connection ▪ Nevada Education Consultants ▪ Center for Independent Living ▪ CASA Foundation ▪ Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth 	The Children's Cabinet of Washoe County	Job Opportunities in Nevada (JOIN) Ron Wood Family Resource Center	Stepping Stones Tribal Shelter
STATE FUNDS FOR FORMER FOSTER YOUTH	Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth	The Children's Cabinet of Washoe County	Job Opportunities in Nevada (JOIN)	Not Allocated

APPENDIX C

EDUCATION TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM (ETV)

INTRODUCTION

Federal legislation implemented the Foster Care Independence act of 1999 (FCIA), also called the John H. Chafee Independence Program. The State of Nevada's funding allows increased support and services to foster youth transitioning from foster care to independent living and former foster youth between the ages of 18 and 21 years of age. An additional \$42 million was earmarked for Chafee Independent Living; Education and Training Vouchers Program under appropriations for FY2003 and this Bill was signed into law on February 20, 2003.

The State of Nevada Department of Human Resources, Division of Child and Family Services was approved and received first year funding of the Education Training Voucher (ETV) Program for fiscal year 2003, with actual spending period from January 1, 2004 to September 30, 2004. Additional funds were reallocated to Nevada with further funding allotted on an annual basis. The State of Nevada ETV program will expand and supplement the assistance authorized in the Foster Care Independence Act to help children in foster care or who may remain in foster care until emancipation, to enter postsecondary educational or training programs.

The ETV Program allows states to provide funds for youth who have been in foster care to attend an institution of higher education (as defined by the Higher Education Act, section 101,102). Foster youth may receive up to \$5,000 per year or the total "cost of attendance" (as defined by the Higher Education Act, section 472). For Nevada's foster youth and former foster youth who are planning to attend postsecondary schools and specialized technical and/or vocational job training programs, the ETV Program provides support and needed services to allow the attainment of their educational goals. The Division supervises the ETV program and distributes ETV funds to eligible youth through a grant to a community nonprofit organization.

ELIGIBILITY

Youth who are currently eligible for Chafee services are eligible for the ETV program. Additionally, the ETV Program eliminates a gap in eligibility for youth adopted at age 16 or older who are omitted under the State's Fund for Former Foster Youth. The following categories of eligible populations are based on federal program guidelines:

1. Youth Aging Out of Care: all youth exiting licensed foster care at age, eighteen (or legally emancipated earlier than age 18) are eligible to apply for educational assistance and independent living services.
2. Young adults, formerly in foster care, adopted at age 16 or older.
3. Young adults, formerly in foster care, exiting at age 18, currently age 18 up to age 21.

4. Young adults, formerly in foster care, exiting at age 18, currently age 21 remain eligible until they attain 23 years of age, if participating in ETV Program on their 21st birthday and are enrolled in a postsecondary education or training program and are making satisfactory progress toward completion of their program.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Help youth 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 independent living. Information of the ETV program is provided at the development of Transitional Plan and at exit interview. Until recently, financial resources and support was limited for foster youth to pursue post-secondary education and vocational training programs. A Clark County survey of foster youth found that 75% of youth surveyed planned a postsecondary education, although few accomplished that goal upon emancipation from the foster care system.

Currently established collaborations with community-based independent living 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 are in development during first-year program operation. The Division 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 independent living 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. Help youth receive education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment.

Statewide, the Chafee funds support independent living 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. Help youth prepare for and enter postsecondary training and educational institutions.

Education 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.

Independent Living 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 Independent Living 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. The Division 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 Independent Living 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 Independent Living 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.

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 D

TITLE IV-E TRAINING PLAN

Training offered by the Division of Child and Family Services supports the outcomes for safety, permanency, and well-being, as well as the goals and objectives of the Division's Program Improvement Plan. Training priorities identified below are based on the Statewide Self-Assessment. Once the Division has received the final Summary of Findings report, the training plan will be modified in order to support the activities identified in the Program Improvement Plan.

STAFF TRAINING

Through the University Partnership, consisting of the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) & University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), social work education and permanency planning training is provided for students in preparation for employment with the Division and partner agencies; and to provide initial training and ongoing training to staff who promote and provide permanency services and supports. The anticipated outcome is that services will better reflect innovative and effective strategies and techniques. The training, curriculum development and field placement program is intended to comply with the following:

- 45CFR1356.60 (c), which allows these types of programs to support activities "...necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the Title IV-E state plan";
- 45CFR235.62 (A), which permits any such program to "include short term and long term training at educational institutions through grants to institutions or by direct financial assistance to students enrolled in institutions or agency employees or persons preparing for employment with the state or local agency.", and
- 45CFR235.63 (c)(1), which states that "Grants are made for the purpose of developing, expanding, or improving training for personnel employed by the state or local agency or preparing for employment by the State or local agency administering the program. Grants are made for an educational program (curriculum development, classroom instruction, field instruction or any combination of these) that is directly related to the agency's program."

All new child welfare staff will receive initial training. Advance training and specialty trainings will be provided on a statewide basis. Upon receipt of the CFSR findings and the development of the PIP, it is anticipated that curriculums and the required training will be modified and/or enhanced.

The Academy will provide the initial training of all child welfare workers. Courses on family centered investigation, separation issues, and engaging families in permanency planning are the basic core minimum courses that will be provided. The curriculum will be revised based on the analysis of national curricula that are

competency and skill based. UNITY will be integrated into the training in order to create a strong link between concepts and practice.

The training schedule alternates between a week of classroom training and a week of field training. The workers will spend a total of four weeks in the classroom. The academy will be offered four times a year, alternating between Reno and Las Vegas. Nevada Training Partnership pays for the travel expenses of new hires, regardless of location to facilitate timely attendance at the academy. Subsequently, a new worker should be able to attend the academy within four to six weeks of their actual start date of employment. To help orient new workers to their offices and the field, an extensive series of pre-academy shadowing experiences, reading assignments, computer-based training, and videos have been developed that must also be completed before attending the academy.

Required Classes, such as Culture & Diversity, the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), and the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA) are offered statewide.

Advanced Training will be based on the CFSR findings and the Program Improvement Plan. CFSR findings indicate that state training priorities should focus on:

- Supervisory Training
- Safety and Risk Assessment
- Case planning and Family Engagement
- Visitation as Proactive Strategy
- Court/Legal Issues Training
- Assessing Needs and Services
- Culture and Diversity

Supervisory Training has been identified as one of the highest priorities. Based on the CFSR findings, feedback from the field and a review of existing curriculums, training will be developed and implemented.

The Educational Stipend Program at UNR and UNLV are used to encourage bachelors degree level and masters degree level social work students to go into the Child Welfare field. In Nevada, there is an additional need to recruit and retain qualified professionals willing to work in areas that are considered “hard to recruit”. Targeted stipends places the priorities as:

- Candidates willing to work in rural offices;
- Professional candidates that are Bi-lingual;
- New workers to the field; and
- Enhancement of current workers skill levels.

Resource Family Training

Resource Family (Foster Parents and Adoptive Parents) trainings are primarily provided by each of the three agencies (Division, Washoe County and Clark County) staff with former or current Resource Families as co-trainers. The Institute of Human Services Foster Parent Curriculum is used in all three regions. Each of the training programs provides:

- Resource Families Orientation and Pre-Service Training to all potential Resource Families. The training addresses the issues related to abuse and neglect, the importance of relationships, the effects of care giving and permanency issues; and
- Resource Families Ongoing Training topics will be identified by the PIP, feedback from the Resource Families and child welfare workers. The ongoing training may be accessed through the University Partnership, local Foster Parent Associations, Agency sponsored events, and web based training, audio conference training and videos/books.

Funding Sources

Staff Training is provided through Child Welfare (IVE) training contracts with UNR and UNLV. Both universities provide the match and the services. Both universities contracts are in effect until June 30, 2005. Resource Family training funds are within the three agencies. Washoe County and Clark County hire full time staff to provide coordination and implementation of training. The Division rural region has one recruitment/trainer staff person and initiates contracts with local organizations to provide services throughout the rural region.

Training Activities/Events Charts

The training classes are described in detail in the “Training Activities/Events Charts”, which reflects staff development through the Nevada Training Partnership (NTP), UNITY training, Clark County and Resource Families training. These charts are available and maintained by the Division. The information on the charts includes the following information for each course:

- Brief narrative of the training activity;
- Allowable IV-E administrative functions;
- Setting for the training activity;
- Duration of the training activity;
- Proposed provider;
- Approximate number of hours/days;
- Audience;
- Estimated total cost, and
- Cost allocation methodology.

Nevada Training Partnership

The workers from three child welfare agencies will have the opportunity to attend the Academy (initial training) and advance specialty trainings. Detailed information on this training is noted in the section of the plan containing the “Training Activities/Events Charts” for the eight Academy classes, as well as ten additional classes. UNLV will work with NTP to provide training through the Training Series (Web cast) and on topics identified in the Program Improvement Plan.

The following is a listing of the available courses:

ACADEMY

Overview
Family Centered Child Protection
Services
Child Development
Separation & Loss
Engaging the Family in the
Permanency Process
Legal Requirements
Documentation
Major Risk Factors

ONGOING TRAINING

Culture & Diversity
Indian Child Welfare Act
Multi-Ethnic Placement Act
Safety Assessment
Forensic Interviewing
Domestic Violence
Foster Parent/Relationship
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
Staff Safety
Training of Trainers

UNITY

In the first five months of 2004, the two UNITY training staff have provided 1,770 hours of training to 327 workers statewide. Division UNITY staff provides the initial training to Division staff, as well as Clark County and Washoe county staff.

Training modules:

Introduction	Adoptions
Super Course	Juvenile Services
CPS Intake/Investigations	Fiscal Licensing
Substitute Care	Eligibility
	Refresher

Clark County

Clark County began the implementation of a Systems of Care Grant by providing intensive training to the supervisors and key staff on Solution Oriented Interventions. The Systems of Care training after July 1, 2004 is in the process of being identified.

The Clark County Parenting Project is providing additional training for Resource Families and Post-Adoption families. The programs are the following:

1. Nurturing Parents and Families
2. ABC's of Parenting
3. ParenTeen Solutions
4. Baby Care

Resource Families

All three agencies used the same curriculum, then modified it to better meet the needs in their region. Below is a list of each course:

PRE-SERVICE	ONGOING
Orientation	Use of Child Restraint Devices
Teambuilding	Bereavement Training
Child Abuse & Neglect	Infant Brain Development
Unique Challenges	Attention Deficit Disorder
Permanency Issues	Medically Fragile Children
Child Development	Advance Child Development
Separation and Attachment	CASA
Discipline	Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
Licensing & Regulations	Flexible Family Resource
Sexual Abuse	It Could Happen to You
Culture Issues/Effects of Care Giving	