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**Mono County  
Child and Family Services  
Self-Assessment  
2013**

**Child Welfare  
Juvenile Probation**

**Submitted to:**  
**California Department of Social Services**  
**Children's Services Outcomes and Accountability Bureau**  
**Office of Child Abuse Prevention**  
**By**  
**Mono County Department of Social Services**  
**Mono County Probation Department**

**April 2013**

**\*\* EXCERPT \*\***

### **XIII. SUMMARY ASSESSMENT**

To obtain feedback from the community, Child Welfare and Probation Self-Assessment Questionnaire surveys were sent out (see attachment G) to public and private agencies, schools, tribes and all Mono County CSA Core Representatives to elicit information regarding services and needs. In addition follow-up efforts were made to via email, letters, and telephone calls.

On April 11, 2012 a Safe Families Strengthening Families Assessment group meeting was held in Mono County. The Self Assessment included completion of a self assessment questionnaire and a group meeting to determine the greatest strengths needs of families who have engagement with Mono County Child Welfare and Probation Departments. The participants in the Safe Families Strengthening Families Assessment included: First 5 Mono County, Head Start-Preschool, Mono County Office of Education, Parenting Program, Community Advisory Committee (Parents), Mono County Child Welfare, Mono County Alternative Education, Town of Mammoth Lakes Recreation Department, Mono County Public Health and Mono County Behavioral Health.

In addition to all the participants mentioned above for both the Child Welfare and Probation Self-Assessment , and the Safe Families Strengthening Families Assessment interviews were conducted with the Mono County DSS Program Manager, the Probation Chief, Social Workers, and Juvenile Probation Officer for the purpose of gathering CWS/Probation improvement recommendations.

#### **Safe Families Strengthening Families Assessment**

- A. Overall the group concluded that the areas for improvement are:
  - 1. Father's support and information;
  - 2. Cultural;
  - 3. Communication with parents;
  - 4. Parental Support;
  - 5. Mandated Reporter Training;
  - 6. Early Signs of Abuse/Neglect Training;
  - 7. Multi-Disciplinary Teams.
- B. Areas of greatest strengths by agencies assessed:
  - 1. Facilitate friendships and mutual support: Wild Iris, Library, First 5 Peapod, SELPA, Town Recreation Dept., MUSD, and HeadStart.
  - 2. Strengthen parenting: HeadStart, First 5 Peapod, IMACA, Behavioral Health, Library, Health Dept., MUSD, and SELB.
  - 3. Respond to family crises: CPS, Behavioral Health, Hospital, and Probation.
  - 4. Link families to services and opportunities: Health Dept., Behavioral Health, MUSD, CPS, First 5 Peapod, HeadStart.
  - 5. Facilitate children's social and emotional development: HeadStart, First 5 Peapod, SELPS, CPS, MUSD, and Behavioral Health.

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6. Recognize and respond to early warning signs of child abuse/neglect: CPS, Behavioral Health, First 5 Peapod, HeadStart, Hospital, and MUSD.
7. Value and support of parents: Behavioral Health, First 5 Peapod, HeadStart and MUSD.

The 2013 Self Assessment questionnaire was distributed to all the CSA Core Representatives, Child Abuse Prevention Council members, CWS subcontractors and the public. The results of this self-assessment questionnaire are summarized as shown below.

### **Child Welfare and Probation Self-Assessment**

#### **A. What area(s) do you believe Social Workers and/or Probation Officers need to be better skilled in to serve children and families in Mono County?**

- Family engagement and participatory case planning practices.
- Awareness of Behavioral Health issues with children and referrals to the Mono County Behavioral Health Department.
- Ability to recognize Child Development issues and make appropriate referrals.
- Family Assessment Tools to better assess the needs of the entire family not just the children.
- Awareness of Sexual Abuse.
- Better timely communication with social workers and support agencies to enhance services for children.
- A mentoring program for stability and support for the children.
- Foster parent availability for training to be kept up to date on best practices.
- More ILP services, Education assistance, GED preparation, vocational training, community college.
- More substance abuse treatment for Indian tribe members.

#### **B. What do you believe are the most effective current services Child Welfare Services and Probation offer in Mono County.**

- Multi Agency Collaborative Wraparound services.
- Family Meetings during and after the case planning process.
- Sibling contact/visitation facilitated by the Probation Officer or CWS Social Worker.
- Therapeutic/Clinical work to resolve underlying problems with families and children.
- Timely responses by Social Workers enhance services for children with contractors.
- The Probation Department has responded in an appropriate and timely manner to the concerns that have been raised by the Indian Colony.
- Always can depend on immediate/timely responsiveness of CWS and Probation to the initial problem, and the working together towards problem resolution.

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### **Summary Assessment Findings:**

#### Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment and Retention

Because Mono County has only one emergency placement home and no foster family homes or a Foster Family Agency, it is critical that the twice a year foster family recruitments (one north county, one south county, including the Benton area) continue for new foster family homes.

#### Concurrent Planning

While Social Workers have received Concurrent Planning training in the last two years, the Social Services Department may benefit from continued and updated training for the Social Workers and management staff due to the high turnover of staff. Concurrent Planning enhances the ability of families and Social Workers to work toward reunification.

#### Family Finding Program

Implementation of a formal Family Finding Program would be helpful in placing children in the least restrictive environment and optimistically reducing the child's time in placement settings. Mono County may be able to work with a Family Finding Program on a pay-per-use basis to help find relatives of children in CWS.

#### Safety Organized Practice (SOP)

SOP provides a strong framework for assessing safety in partnership with the family from referral to post-permanency. CWS plans on continuing training and implementation of SOP. SOP brings the best of solution-focused treatment to Child Welfare as a clear, rigorous practice model.

#### Wraparound Plan

The current structure for the Wrap Program reflects the history of and desire for cohesive working relations between Mono County agencies. The Mono County Wrap Program is a collaborative effort between the primary county agencies involved in providing services to children and their families: Mono County Behavioral Health, Mono County Social Services, Mono County Probation, and Mono County Public Health.

Continue Wrap Program training for all collaborating agencies. Given Mono County's small size, it is not unusual for a family to be known by each of the agencies participating in the Wrap Program. Such a high level of collaboration enhances recognition and utilization of the strengths of individuals, families, service providers, and other community partners.

#### Native American/Child Welfare/Probation Collaboration

Invite Native American tribal members and/or tribal leaders to CWS and/or Probation trainings that are being held in Mono County, as appropriate. This will facilitate current and future collaboration with the tribe(s) and facilitate communication between the agencies and the tribe(s).

#### Continue Community-based Partnerships for the Education and Prevention of Child Abuse

Continue to invest in the child abuse education and prevention programs funded in fiscal year 2012-2013 under the CBCAP/CAPIT/PSSF prevention funds. These programs reach underserved and isolated families in ways that county agencies cannot. By partnering with these community-based organizations, the county is able to leverage enhanced funding, outreach, and services thereby extending the reach and diversity of children and families served throughout Mono County.