



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION

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October 31, 2019

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair
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From: Judge Michael Nash (Ret.) 
Executive Director

PROGRESS UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE OFFICE OF CHILD PROTECTION

In the final report of the Los Angeles County Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection (BRCCP), *The Road to Safety for Our Children*, two key recommendations were to “establish an entity to oversee one unified child protection system,” and for it to create a strategic plan for the work it will focus on. On June 10, 2014, the Board adopted the recommendations contained within that BRCCP final report and took action to establish the Office of Child Protection (OCP) as a separate entity reporting directly to the Board and located within the Executive Office. In October 2016, the OCP submitted to the Board its Countywide Child Protection Strategic Plan, which categorizes the work across five goal areas: prevention, safety, permanency, well-being, and cross-cutting approaches. It has submitted quarterly updates on its progress since August 1, 2016; this is a report on its progress since the last update submitted on July 31, 2019.

GOAL 1: PREVENTION *Provide children and families with the upfront supports and services they need to prevent them from entering the child welfare system and/or limit their involvement with the system once they are known to it.*

Countywide Prevention Plan

- Partnering with First 5 LA, the Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development to lead activities across the six action areas outlined in the plan
 - ✧ Networking the Networks Working with First 5 LA, DPH, the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS), the Prevention and Aftercare networks (P&As), the Children’s Data Network, and the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development to identify strategies for enhancing connections and coordination across existing prevention networks

- Met with leading County economic-support divisions and related community partners—including WDACS, the Child Support Services Department (CSSD), the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs, the Chief Executive Office's Economic Development division, First 5 LA, United Way of Greater Los Angeles, Prevention & Aftercare agency leaders, and academia—to discuss the key recommendation from our analysis involving increasing economic stability for families.
- Planning a convening of local network and County leaders with partners to share this learning broadly, choose priority opportunities to pursue together, and decide on workgroups/initiative leaders to move those initiatives forward
- ✧ Prevention and Aftercare Network Capacity Working with the P&As to help reach families that could benefit from support as early as possible, and to expand the networks' capacity to serve more families
 - In anticipation of the July 1, 2020, P&A funding reduction that will occur when the additional short-term DMH allocation is spent, Gita Cugley & Associates (GC&A) facilitated communication with DMH and DCFS to identify potential carryover funding. Future assistance will target best options to absorb the funding reduction with the least impact to the P&A networks. One option is to “right-size” the contracts starting July 1, 2020, based on current spending trends. Frequent funding discussions are anticipated to ensure the stability of the carryover providers who are awarded new 2021 P&A contracts, and to maximize any funds underutilized by providers who may be transitioning out.
 - DCFS, DMH, and GC&A reviewed P&A network data and organized a data workgroup that includes representatives from the P&As, DMH, DCFS, and GC&A. Differences in interpretations of what data should be reported and what data is missing were identified as areas to address. The workgroup is meeting twice monthly until these issues are resolved.
 - GC&A provided Long-Term Engagement of Families training to the P&As, as requested. Training for entry-level staff client engagement was also identified as a need; GC&A will develop and disseminate training in this area.
 - GC&A is developing a questionnaire for providers to disclose additional needed support in P&A program financing, program development, and training, as well as to report key successes and areas of difficulty.
- ✧ Home Visitation Working with DPH, First 5 LA, DMH, DCFS, the Probation Department, Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), the Children's Data Network, the Center for Strategic Partnerships, the Los Angeles Best Babies Network, and the LA County Perinatal and Early Childhood Home Visitation Consortium (Consortium) on developing a plan for expanding home-visitation services available to vulnerable families
 - HealthNet expanded its MemberConnections program to all Los Angeles plan members, providing intentional outreach and postpartum home visits to any

members who do not engage in standard postpartum office appointments. This change represents an important opportunity to develop a real safety net through which all new mothers receive support during the sensitive postpartum period. The program was previously being offered only through a pilot in the Antelope Valley; now it is offered countywide.

- DPH finalized amendments to its existing Healthy Families America (HFA) and Parents As Teachers (PAT) contracts in September to extend those services to CalWORKs clients effective July 2019; these amendments increase the funds available for these programs by \$6,647,763 (from \$13,295,540 to \$19,943,303). With these in place, DPH, DPSS, and their partners are now able to deliver three different home-visitation models to the CalWORKs population: Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP), HFA, and PAT.
- Contracts were established to solidify consultant support for two key system improvement initiatives:
 - Business and sustainability planning to establish the long-term infrastructure and funding mechanisms needed to grow and sustain Los Angeles Best Babies Network (LABBN) as the lead coordinator for quality, workforce, and data/technology for the County's home-visiting system. Funded by the Partnership for Early Childhood Investment and First 5 LA, this project is a joint effort among DPH, First 5 LA, LABBN, and other partners to ensure long-term system quality. The resulting business plan is expected to be completed by June 2020.
 - Technical assistance from two national experts in financing and systems-level implementation of home-visiting systems, Jeanna Capito and Kay Johnson, to support Los Angeles County's ongoing planning efforts. This strategic support is underwritten by the Heising-Simons Foundation and overseen by DMH, DPH, and First 5 LA. It will build on the *Strengthening Home Visiting in Los Angeles County: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Child, Family, and Community Well-Being* report submitted to the Board in July 2018, lessons learned locally over the last year, and studies of practices in other states to help further refine the system's operational components, as well as to confirm key roles and structures needed to fully achieve and sustain home visiting in Los Angeles. The process will result in an updated plan for Los Angeles County, a toolkit to benefit efforts across the state, and recommendations to inform state advocacy efforts (all anticipated to be completed by June 2020).
- The OCP completed a capacity and utilization assessment for the full home-visiting system in October. This study captured key data regarding the county's increased home-visiting capacity—including expansions in HealthNet, Molina Healthcare, Early Head Start, HFA, PAT, NFP, Healthy Start, and *doula* programming—and the current status of enrollment and program utilization across these models and others. It also examined three key strategic questions related to our current system state:




- How have health-sector partnerships augmented County investments to move us closer to our vision of universal home-based support?
- How effectively are our programs in reaching and enrolling African-American families and other racial/ethnic subgroups?
- How well are we doing in reaching prenatal clients (to achieve improved birth outcomes)?

Results and recommendations from the study were discussed with the Home-Visiting Leadership Council to help determine next steps.

- ✧ Early Care and Education (ECE) Working with the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development, First 5 LA, the Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, DCFS, DPH, the Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families, DMH, the Child Care Planning Committee, the Alliance for Children's Rights, the Advancement Project, the Southern California Chapter of the California Association for the Education of Young Children, the P&A networks, the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), and others to create a roadmap for improving access to early care and education programs
 - Collected additional data from ECE providers—as well as stakeholders from Pacoima/Northeast San Fernando Valley, DMH, DPSS, and the County Library—to support regional revenue and expense models
 - Shared key findings and recommendations from the fiscal analysis and discussed next steps with stakeholders including the Child Care Planning Committee, Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development, LACOE, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, Antelope Valley Home Visiting Consortium, and the Long Beach Early Care and Education Committee
 - Began planning to implement the roadmap recommendations with the OCP/Policy Roundtable Prevention Plan ECE Workgroup and staff from DPH's Office for the Advancement of Early Care and Education
 - Completing logistics for an Early Care and Education Summit to be held on December 6, 2019, that will officially release the report
- ✧ Measuring Prevention Working with First 5 LA, DMH, DCFS, the Children's Data Network, the Chief Executive Office (CEO), DPH, DHS, LACOE, and other data experts to develop a set of standardized measures of prevention to evaluate the effectiveness of prevention-plan implementation efforts
 - Developed a countywide prevention-metrics ecological framework to capture the holistic goal of the OCP's Prevention Plan. The framework comprises three levels—strong children, strong families, and strong communities—encompassing three dimensions (health, safety, and development/well-being), and underscores the need to reduce risk factors and support protec-

tive factors throughout the three dimensions at all levels, and to develop strategies to do so through broad-based prevention programming.

- The team identified a set of impact indicators and actionable indicators within this ecological framework. Impact indicators are a measure of the extent to which the County has achieved its broader Prevention Plan objectives and longer-term goals at the population level. Actionable indicators measure the performance of key programs and initiatives that relate to the Prevention Plan. The indicators identified are a starting point for common prevention-related measures and will evolve over time. The list of impact indicators, organized within the ecological framework, is below.

Countywide Prevention Metrics Impact Indicators			
	Safety	Development & Well-Being	Health
 Strong children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of children with Child Protective Services involvement at any point during the first 5 years of life • Rate of preventable child injury • Rate of preventable child death 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of children birth to age 3 participating in early intervention services • Rate of high school graduation / GED attainment • Rate of disconnected youth • Rate of college/career readiness • Rate of juvenile arrests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of full-term births • Rate of infant mortality • Percentage of school-age children with healthy weight • Rate of vaccine-preventable diseases (measles, mumps, pertussis) • Rate of youth depression
 Strong families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of families experiencing domestic violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of families experiencing financial insecurity • Rate of perceived social support among parents • Rate of families experiencing food insecurity • Rate of families experiencing housing insecurity • Rate of homeless families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of maternal depression
 Strong communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of perceived community safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community assets per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate of access to healthy foods

- The OCP and the Chief Information Office (CIO) plan to release a preliminary set of data by the spring of 2020.

GOAL 2: SAFETY *Minimize, if not eliminate, the risk that a child known to one or more entities in our system will be harmed.*

Implementation of Anthony A. Report Recommendations

- On August 10, 2018, the OCP, DCFS, Health Agency, DHS, and the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) filed a joint response to the Board's motion to review the case that included the death of 10-year-old Anthony Avalos. The report contained eight recommendations for systems improvements. A six-month follow-up report on efforts to implement these recommendations was submitted to the Board on February 14, 2019. Implementation efforts to date on the recommendations include:

1) Reevaluate DCFS's Voluntary Family Maintenance (VFM) process.

The revised draft VFM policy was vetted through DCFS's stakeholder review process, Policy Review Committee, and a "meet and confer" with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 721. It is currently under review by DCFS senior executives.

2) Improve the skills of staff interviewing children.

- ✧ DHS and DCFS have finalized quarterly trainings to be delivered by County Medical Hub providers to DCFS staff—open to LASD staff as well—throughout the county on identifying signs of basic abuse (from maltreatment, neglect, or accidents) and when social workers and law-enforcement staff should bring children in for medical exams at the Hubs or other hospitals. Trainings will begin countywide in November 2019.
- ✧ Dr. Thomas Lyon from USC is continuing to work with DCFS on developing a training series on different aspects of interviewing skills. The Interviewing Training was filmed in August. Content for the Forensic Interviewing video is still in development.

3) Retrain social workers on the proper use of Structured Decision Making® (SDM).

See "Risk Assessment and System Improvement Recommendation Implementation" on page 8 for a full description.

4) Increase collaboration between DCFS and law enforcement.

- ✧ The DCFS/LASD pilot to conduct joint investigations of alleged child abuse and neglect in the Antelope Valley is continuing. In August and September, a total of 161 joint investigations occurred in Lancaster and Palmdale. Extending the joint program to Santa Clarita is expected to begin sometime in December.

- ✧ Work also continues on developing a comprehensive DCFS/law-enforcement protocol. The workgroup has been expanded to include representatives from the District Attorney and the Los Angeles Police Department.
- ✧ Three updates were recently made to the Electronic Suspected Child Abuse Report System (eSCARS):
 - Notification when a forensic exam has been scheduled at a Medical Hub
 - Adding the option for law enforcement to add an “investigative alert” to an existing eSCAR, with an explanation as to what additional questions or concerns they have about this family
 - The Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office now has eSCARS access.

5) Improve the Medical Hub system.

See the “County Medical Hubs” section on page 14 for a full description.

6) Improve the investigation skills of social workers at the front end and beyond.

The state is finalizing a new Core Academy training for supervising social workers that is anticipated to be completed in January 2020; rollout is scheduled to begin in March 2020.

7) Improve the capacity to assess needs and progress made throughout the span of the case.

DPH’s Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH-SAPC) unit, DMH, and DCFS have partnered to outstation substance-abuse counselors in DCFS regional offices to provide on-site support and connections to further substance-abuse supports for those parents or youth who need them. These counselors are also available to consult with social workers on cases involving substance-abuse issues and to offer guidance on how best to handle them.

- ✧ Substance-abuse counselors have been outstationed in 15 DCFS regional offices—Lancaster, Palmdale, Van Nuys, Santa Clarita, Chatsworth, Glendora, Pomona, Pasadena, Covina Annex, Metro North, West Los Angeles, Vermont Corridor, Compton East, El Monte, and Torrance. Additionally, counselors are now outstationed at a DPH office in SPA 7 to work with families served by the Belvedere and Santa Fe Springs offices.
- ✧ DPH-SAPC reports that between May 1, 2018, and September 30, 2019, a total of 2,503 parents were referred by DCFS for substance-use screenings as a result of this program.

- ✧ Of this number, 1,638 were screened for substance-use disorders; 1,419 of those had a positive screen and were referred to treatment services within their communities.

8) Reduce social worker caseloads.

DCFS has recently released bulletins for positions unique to the Antelope Valley as part of a targeted recruitment plan to increase staffing in its Palmdale and Lancaster offices. It has also temporarily reassigned two Assistant Regional Administrators to the Lancaster office, along with an emergency-response strike team to assist with completing investigations that have been open for more than 30 days.

Risk Assessment and System Improvement Recommendation Implementation

- Partnering with DCFS to implement the recommendations outlined by the OCP in its report of May 2017
 - ✧ The National Council on Crime & Delinquency (NCCD) is continuing its assessment of the field use of Structured Decision Making® (SDM) here in Los Angeles County and identifying what policy, training, and practice changes are needed to ensure the proper use of the tool. DCFS is now acting on the series of recommendations made by NCCD in January 2019 involving the use of SDM during the screening, removal, and case-opening decision process.
 - ✧ NCCD facilitated a series of workgroups at DCFS in August and September 2019 to address specific challenges identified in the fidelity review. These included:
 - Reviewing the manner through which the DCFS Hotline staff pre-screen some referrals and designate them as “consultations,” as opposed to providing a full screening and entering them in the CWS/CMS data system
 - Better connecting the SDM safety assessment (which helps DCFS staff identify children in immediate danger) with the DCFS warrant-consult process
 - Enhancing the DCFS safety planning policy
 - Developing a process for making consistent case-promotion decisions that include the findings from SDM safety and risk tools
 - ✧ New SDM training rollout is scheduled for early 2020 and will continue throughout the year.
 - ✧ NCCD researchers continue their analysis of how SDM is being used at DCFS, focusing on how the tool informs reunification and case-closure decisions. A report is expected in January 2020.

Use of Public Health Nurses (PHNs) in Child Welfare

- The Child Welfare PHN (CWPHN) Steering Committee continues to meet and address issues resulting from the consolidation of the child-welfare PHNs into DPH, and has begun working to implement some of the recommendations from the OCP's report on the *Best Use of PHNs in Child Welfare* (December 2017).
 - ✧ The CWPHNs are administering the Psychotropic Medication Youth Engagement Worksheet, a tool to increase youths' understanding of why they are taking medication and help ensure they have the skills and knowledge needed to manage their medications and health before they age out of the child-welfare system.
 - ✧ DPH held two hiring fairs over the summer. Thirty-one PHNs were recruited from outside of the County or transferred from other DPH programs to fill existing vacancies within the CWPHN unit, including 20 for children in out-of-home care with medical conditions and 11 for families undergoing DCFS investigations and children receiving services from County Medical Hubs, or to provide care coordination for children with open DCFS cases who are residing with their parents.

Electronic Data-Sharing Efforts

- Working with DCFS, the CIO, and County Counsel on a web-based portal to facilitate the electronic sharing of information relevant to investigations of child abuse or neglect across seven County departments and DCFS, based on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that the OCP finalized with participating departments, County Counsel, and the CEO
 - ✧ The Emergency Response Investigation Service (ERIS) is now being used by emergency-response workers in all DCFS offices. Data accessible in this initial phase of ERIS includes family members' DCFS history and criminal-background information, which helps streamline DCFS investigations and placing children with relatives when a removal is necessary.
 - ✧ Phase II of ERIS is being developed by the Internal Services Department, CIO, and DCFS, adding data from additional departments and incorporating changes based on user feedback to improve system functioning.
 - ✧ User focus groups are being held to gather input from emergency-response workers on how to improve the system.
- Working with the Los Angeles Network for Enhanced Services (LANES), DPH, County Counsel, DCFS, and the CEO to provide access to LANES, a health information exchange system, for PHNs who are helping to coordinate health care for DCFS youth. With this access, PHNs will be able to use the LANES portal to view timely health records for their child-welfare clients, as appropriate, to coordinate care and ensure effective treatment.
 - ✧ DPH, DCFS, DHS, and the OCP have clarified the workflow process for social workers and CWPHNs collaborating on DCFS investigations or ongoing care

coordination, and at what point the PHNs will access LANES to obtain needed medical information.

- ✧ A team of PHNs are being trained on accessing the LANES health information system. This team will troubleshoot the process and be the trainers for other PHNs using the system, once access is available.

GOAL 3: PERMANENCY *No child leaves the system without a permanent family or a responsible caring adult in his or her life.*

Increasing the Use of Relative Placements

- Now that Wateridge North and Wateridge South have joined in, a total of 10 DCFS offices are involved in the Upfront Family-Finding project, which works to place children with their relatives as soon as they are removed from their homes.
 - ✧ From January through August 2019, 1,835 children were the subject of new detention hearings in the eight then-active offices; 79% were placed with kin.
 - ✧ Since the project began in October 2016, 4,279 children have been the subject of new detention hearings in those eight offices; 79% were placed with kin.
 - ✧ The contracting process is underway for Child Trends to conduct a longitudinal study of the project to evaluate its impact on placement stability, reunification, and more.

Permanency and Self-Sufficiency Planning for Transition-Age Youth (TAY)

- On September 4, 2019, the OCP submitted a report to the Board of Supervisors, *Increasing Stability and Permanency for Transition-Age Youth*, which contained recommendations from the OCP Permanency Workgroup on data, family reunification, Youth Permanency Units, and the Dave Thomas Foundation's foster-child adoption project, "Wendy's Wonderful Kids," plus a draft analysis of programs and benefits available to eligible youth.
- Beginning November 1, 2019, DCFS will provide monthly data on dependency-court cases taking longer than 90 days to reach the disposition stage, youth in a plan of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA), and youth awaiting the completion of their adoptions.

Transitional Shelter Care (TSC) Pilot

- Bi-weekly meetings continue with stakeholders—including DCFS, DMH, Probation, the Juvenile Court, the Children's Law Center, Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), County Counsel, and others—to discuss the multidisciplinary teaming pilot led by DCFS' Accelerated Placement Team (APT), along with DMH, to stabilize and find permanency for hard-to-place youth (overstays and chronic repeaters) at 10-day Temporary Shelter Care Facilities (TSCFs).

- ✧ To date, 90 youth have been a part of this program.
- ✧ Since our last progress update, DCFS has added two social workers to its highly effective APT.
- ✧ Recently, the group has been discussing issues related to placement rejections by Short-Term Residential Therapeutic Programs (STRTPs) and how to ensure the appropriateness of these rejections, given the purpose of and the resources available at STRTPs.
- ✧ At its most recent meeting on October 24, the group excitedly learned that one of its long-term clients is set to begin employment at DCFS. Another is set to return home in three weeks, and at least two others who are doing well have upcoming Child and Family Team (CFT) meetings. The work of the professionals involved with these youth continues to be inspiring.

GOAL 4: WELL-BEING *Ensure that system-involved youth achieve the physical, emotional, and social health needed to be successful.*

Efforts to Improve Educational Achievement

- Working with John Burton Advocates for Youth and relevant County departments to facilitate enhanced support for post-secondary educational attainment for youth in the child-welfare and juvenile-justice systems, and to implement SB 12 provisions
 - ✧ DCFS, Probation, and LACOE are participating in 2019–20's *California Foster Youth FAFSA® Challenge* (Free Application for Federal Student Aid), designed to increase system-involved youths' access to financial aid for college by increasing FAFSA completion rates. Last year, Los Angeles County matched general-population rates by assisting 61% of eligible system youth to complete FAFSA applications, nearly doubling its 2017–18 rate of 33% and thereby winning a "most improved" jurisdiction designation from the state.
 - ✧ Partners prepared recommendations for improving financial-aid application rates among system-involved youth in the 2019–20 academic year and submitted them to the Board on October 1, 2019. Bi-weekly meetings are being held to implement the workplan developed in conjunction with those recommendations.
- Working with the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture and DMH to implement a healing-formed arts education pilot for middle and high schools with high numbers of foster and probation youth. The program will help youth build protective factors through the arts and will develop local art-focused networks of mental-health clinicians, artists, teachers, and other stakeholders within schools and their surrounding communities.
 - ✧ Hired a full-time project consultant to work on projects that support improving arts access for at-risk youth, including the healing-informed arts education pilot. The consultant will lead and facilitate a professional-development content-advisory

group and writing team consisting of staff from DMH, OCP, the Department of Arts and Culture, and Arts and Culture professional-development providers to create a curriculum for teachers at the pilot school sites that leverages both DMH and Arts for Incarcerated Youth Network (AIYN) healing-informed practices.

- ✧ The Department of Arts and Culture has contracted with the AIYN to provide art programming at the pilot school sites.
- ✧ The department also contracted with Harder and Company to develop and implement an evaluation of the pilot. Evaluators will work closely with Arts and DMH staff to develop outcome measures that can be used across a variety of arts education projects in the County.
- ✧ Partners began adapting a professional-development curriculum for educators and related service providers, Mental Health First Aid, to be provided to participating schools in February through May of 2020.
- Continuing to partner with DCFS, Los Angeles County school districts, and LACOE to implement the foster-youth school-stability provisions included in the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)
 - ✧ The Education Coordinating Council (ECC), DCFS, LACOE, LAUSD, and WDACS conducted a transportation pilot to keep foster youth in their schools of origin when that is in their best interest. The two-year pilot, completed on July 30, 2019, served as a “bridge solution” and learning opportunity while long-term transportation agreements between DCFS and the school districts are finalized.
 - ✧ The ECC, DCFS, and LACOE are reaching out to encourage Los Angeles County school districts to sign the long-term ESSA transportation MOU.
 - The ESSA outreach coordinator began in early July to contact superintendents of the 8 school districts with the highest foster-youth populations—Antelope Valley Union High School District, Compton Unified School District, Lancaster School District, Los Angeles Unified School District, Long Beach Unified School District, Pasadena Unified School District, Palmdale School District, and Pomona Unified School District.
 - To date, 6 of these—Antelope Valley, Compton, Lancaster, Palmdale, Pasadena, and LAUSD (which serves approximately 40% of the County’s foster youth)—have signed on to the long-term MOU.
 - Of the 72 remaining districts, 9 have also signed the MOU—Alhambra Unified, Burbank, Duarte, El Monte Union High School District, El Rancho Unified, Glendale Unified, South Pasadena, Westside, and Whittier Union High School District—and 15 others are moving forward with board-of-education approval (ABC Unified, Baldwin Park, Beverly Hills, Culver City, Downey, El Monte City, Hawthorne, Inglewood, Montebello, Norwalk-La

Mirada, Paramount, Redondo Beach, Rosemead, South Whittier, and Torrance).

- The 15 districts whose boards have signed on serve approximately 60% of the County's foster youth, and districts moving forward an additional 12%.
- The ESSA outreach coordinator, OCP, DCFS, and LACOE have attended 5 of LACOE's Regional Learning Network meetings to present on the long-term MOU; audiences included Foster Youth Liaisons from 65 of the county's 80 school districts. A presentation was also made at LACOE's Countywide District Liaison meeting on October 10, 2019.
- The DCFS Education Team has developed a training for social workers around the ESSA school-stability process. To date, 4 regional DCFS offices have received this training, and it will roll out to the remaining offices over the course of the next few months.

Workforce Development

- In August, the departments of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) and Human Resources (DHR) issued their first annual report on the Countywide Youth Bridges Program (CYBP). This program, which launched in December 2017, is the County's first public-sector strategy to establish a direct talent pipeline of next-generation County employees.
 - ✧ The program provides youth ages 16 to 24 with 120 hours of work experience. Once these initial hours have been completed, youth who are 18 years or older are encouraged to apply for a 12-month, full-time internship within the County.
 - ✧ In CYBP's inaugural period, 1,171 youth participated.
 - 68% were ages 16 to 19
 - 94% were youth of color
 - 97% were system-involved youth
 - 80% were justice-involved
 - 12% were current or former foster youth
 - 5% were homeless or housing-insecure
 - ✧ As of June 2019, 110 youth (19%) had taken the youth worker exam, 72 had passed it, and 10 were successfully hired as youth workers within the County.
 - ✧ WDACS and DHR have recommended expanding the available internships to align with the County's High Road Training Partnership model, thereby increasing the types of position levels for which youth may apply.
 - ✧ WDACS has developed an Automated Referral System (ARS) to coordinate and streamline referrals for foster, probation, and homeless youth to the public workforce system. Training and implementation of this system is scheduled to begin in November for all DCFS offices. Once DCFS is connected, the system

will expand to include the Prevention & Aftercare network agencies, Youth Development and Diversion agencies, and other select community organizations.

County Medical Hubs

- Working with DHS, DCFS, DMH, and DPH to implement a detailed work plan to improve the overall Hub system, focusing on timely access to forensic exams and Initial Medical Exams (IMEs) in the short term, and potentially broadening Hub services in the longer term. Examples of recent improvements include:
 - ✧ DHS, DMH, DPH, and DCFS, working with the CEO, added 87 net positions through the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019–20 Supplemental Budget process to meet the demand for core services and expanded hours at the medical Hubs. DHS added 50.0 positions (partially offset by the deletion of 6.0 vacant positions) that include medical providers, nursing staff, and support staff. DCFS added 5.0 social-worker and supervisor positions; DMH added 30.0 positions that partially reconciled 21.0 borrow/loan positions it had used to quickly staff the Hubs, including mental health clinicians, supervisors, and support staff. DPH added 8.0 public-health nurse and clerical-staff positions.
 - Recruitment efforts through DHS, DMH, DPH, and DCFS include job postings for new-hires, reviewing existing lists of qualified candidates, and posting transfer-opportunity bulletins. Candidates have been interviewed for some positions and the hiring process has begun on several.
 - For regions that are harder to recruit for, like the Antelope Valley, DHS is using a recruitment firm and offering incentives. DPH, DMH, and DCFS are working together to clarify co-located staff workflows and address space constraints at some of the Hub clinics.
 - ✧ DHS and DCFS have finalized quarterly trainings to be delivered by Hub medical providers to DCFS staff—open to LASD staff as well—throughout the county on identifying signs of basic abuse (from maltreatment, neglect, or accidents) and when social workers and law-enforcement staff should bring children in for medical exams at the Hubs or other hospitals. Trainings will begin countywide in November 2019.
 - ✧ Caregivers from the communities served by the Harbor-UCLA, MLK Jr., and High Desert Regional Health Center Medical Hubs were convened in September and October 2019 to hear an overview of the Hubs' core services and offer feedback on the strengths and areas of improvement/potential growth of these three Hubs. Additional community convenings by Hub region are planned for Olive View in November 2019 and LAC+USC in December 2019.

Dental Screenings and Exams

- Working with DCFS, DPH, DHS, and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) to develop a plan for increasing the number of foster youth receiving dental screenings and exams, when needed, within policy timeframes.
 - ✧ DCFS, DPH's Oral Health Program, UCLA's Dental Transformation Initiative, and OCP have finalized oral-health trainings for DCFS social workers and supervising social workers to begin at DCFS's Santa Clarita and South County offices in November 2019. Several other DCFS offices have expressed interest and the department's health management services team wants to coordinate November trainings for those offices as well.
 - ✧ The trainings cover the basics of oral health, evidence-based practices for improving oral health for children, strategies to effectively communicate about the importance of good oral health for children, and information on community resources and Denti-Cal benefits. The OCP is working with DCFS, DPH, and UCLA to implement similar trainings for foster-youth caregivers.

Visual Screenings and Eye Exams

- Working with the nonprofit agency Vision to Learn, DCFS, and the Juvenile Court to offer free vision screenings, eye exams, and glasses to those youth who need them at the National Adoption Day event occurring at the Juvenile Court on November 23

Mental Health Coordination

- Working with DCFS and DMH to implement an independent process evaluation of the Multidisciplinary Assessment Team (MAT) and the overall front-end assessment process to help inform how mental health processes can be streamlined for DCFS-involved youth
 - ✧ DCFS and DMH are jointly funding the evaluation, with OCP managing the independent evaluator. OCP has contracted with a consultant team from the California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions (CIBHS) to provide the needed expertise and capacity to:
 - Develop and implement a process evaluation around specific indicators like timeliness, quality of assessments, integration into child-welfare case planning (e.g., Child and Family Team meetings) and court processes, and timely linkages to mental health services
 - Conduct research to determine potential duplications and provide recommendations on streamlining the front-end assessment process for children newly entering the DCFS system, including crosswalking the MAT, MAT/CFT Pilot, and Child and Adolescent Needs and Strength (CANS) assessment processes.

- In the next few weeks, DCFS, DMH, and OCP staff will be working closely with CIBHS to design an evaluation strategy, including submitting a research petition to the court and working with DMH's privacy team to ensure that CIBHS accesses the DCFS/DMH information needed for the evaluation. We anticipate a complete report by the end of 2020.

Addressing Psychotropic Medication Use in Child Welfare

- Monthly meetings of the Psychotropic Medication Workgroup continue to oversee the implementation of the protocols adopted in April 2017 for approving and monitoring the use of psychotropic medications for youth in out-of-home care.
- ✧ A quarterly update of psychotropic medication data was received based on a July 31, 2019, snapshot from DCFS and Probation.
 - **DCFS** data indicate that 1,363 children are being administered psychotropic medications, which is 7.3% of foster children.
 - 300 foster children are being administered anti-psychotic medications, which is 22.01% of foster children on meds.
 - 665 foster children are being administered more than one psychotropic medication, which is 48.79% of foster children on meds.
 - **Probation** data indicate that 69 youth who are suitably placed are being administered psychotropic medications, which is 11% of those in suitable placement.
 - 5 youth in suitable placement are being administered anti-psychotic medications, which is slightly less than 1% of suitably placed youth on meds.
 - 25 youth in suitable placement are being administered more than one psychotropic medication, which is 36% of suitably placed youth on meds.
 - 41 of 59 youth at Dorothy Kirby Center are being administered psychotropic medications, which is 69% of youth at that location; 23 of those youth are on more than one psychotropic medication.
 - 192 of 602 youth in the juvenile halls are being administered psychotropic medication, which is 32% of youth in the halls; 86 youth are on more than one psychotropic medication.
 - 98 of 258 youth in probation camps are being administered psychotropic medication, which is 38% of camp youth; 30 are on more than one psychotropic medication.
- ✧ The Psychotropic Medication Youth Engagement Worksheet has been fully implemented by the DPH child-welfare unit's public health nurses and by

Probation. DCFS has not yet fully implemented the worksheet; full implementation is expected shortly.

- ✧ DPH and DMH are still developing a process to ensure that all necessary lab tests occur for youth who are being administered psychotropic medications.

GOAL 5: CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIES *Rethink structures, programs, and processes, on an ongoing basis, that impact multiple entities, to take advantage of new thinking and learning that meaningfully improves our child protection system.*

Dual-Status Youth Motion

- On March 20, 2018, the Board directed the OCP, in collaboration with multiple County stakeholders and others, to report back on a Countywide plan for dual-status youth. The work on this motion continues with monthly meetings of the Dual-Status Youth Workgroup's two subcommittees—Delinquency Prevention and WIC 241.1 Multidisciplinary Team (MDT).
 - ✧ The Delinquency Prevention Subcommittee has initiated discussions on cross-over youth who touch both the juvenile-justice and child-welfare systems, but not simultaneously.
 - ✧ The WIC 241.1 MDT Subcommittee continues its redrafting of the WIC 241.1 protocols that require DCFS and Probation to jointly assess any youth who comes within the description of WIC 300 and WIC 602.
 - DCFS has provided the subcommittee with a description of the process it uses to identify WIC 602 youth who become the subject of a WIC 300 petition.
 - Discussions on the role of DMH within the multidisciplinary team are pending input from the Public Defender and County Counsel.
 - Current agenda items include defining “lead agency,” communication between the courts (including judicial officers), and resolving conflicts between the courts.

Additional OCP Activities

- Participate on DPH's Office of Violence Prevention Leadership Committee
- Participate in the Strengthening Economic Supports Subcommittee for the state's *Essentials for Childhood* initiative
- Participate in DCFS's workgroup on planning for the Families First Prevention Services Act
- Participate on the state's Comprehensive Risk Aid (CRA) Steering Committee

- Participate in DCFS's Invest LA Initiative Advisory Board
- Participate on the CIO's Business Management Committee for Countywide data-sharing
- Participate in the steering committee to establish a family treatment court in Los Angeles
- Provided funding to the County Library to expand its Reading Machine program that gives young children access to high-quality story times and early literacy-skill practice, using mobile vans, modeling best practices for early literacy-skill support.
- Submitted our systemic assessment report on the tragic death of Noah C. to the Board on August 30, 2019
- Presented on the OCP's work at the Commission for Children and Families on September 9, 2019
- Presented on the OCP's work at the Veterans Advisory Commission on October 9, 2019
- Interviewed by Univision on the child protection system in Los Angeles County on October 10, 2019
- Developing response to Board motion on the tragic death of Andrew M.
- Won the Center for Digital Government's Best of California "Best Application Serving an Agency's Business Needs" award for the ERIS system in August 2019
- Won a Quality and Productivity Commission Gold Eagle Award for our *Moving Families from the Hotline to the Helpline* project in partnership with DCFS, DMH, County Counsel, USC, and the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk on October 16, 2019

In summary, the OCP is working hard to accomplish its goals, as are the relevant County departments and a host of key community partners. We look forward to reporting further progress in our next quarterly update.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (213) 893-1152 or via email at mnash@ocp.lacounty.gov, or your staff may contact Carrie Miller at (213) 893-0862 or via email at cmiller@ocp.lacounty.gov.

MN:eih

c: Chief Executive Office
Executive Office, Board of Supervisors
Alternate Public Defender
Child Support Services

Chief Information Office
Children and Family Services
County Counsel
District Attorney
Fire
Health Services
Mental Health
Parks and Recreation
Probation
Public Defender
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