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Minnesota Child and Family Services Plan

2005 - 2009



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

Child Safety and Permanency Division

June 2004

Table of Contents

I.	General Provisions	
	A. Scope of Plan.....	1
	B. Eligibility for Funds.....	2
	C. Assurances.....	2
	D. Planning Process.....	2
	E. State Agency Administering the Programs.....	2
II.	The Plan: Basic Elements	
	A. Vision.....	5
	B. Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Measures of Progress.....	6
	C. Baseline Information and Analysis.....	30
	D. Consultation.....	31
	E. Service Coordination.....	32
	F. Services.....	33
	G. Family Preservation and Support Services and Linkages.....	35
	H. Services in Relation to Service Principles.....	35
	I. Services in Relation to Permanency Planning.....	36
	J. Decision Making Process.....	37
	K. Funds for Family Preservation and Family Support.....	38
	L. Staff Training, Technical Assistance, and Evaluation.....	38
	M. Quality Assurance.....	41
	N. Distribution.....	42
III.	Other Requirements	
	A. Requirements.....	43
	B. State Agency Administering the Program.....	43
	C. Child and Family Service Continuum.....	43
	D. Service Description.....	43
	E. Estimated Expenditures for Services.....	43
	F. Services in Relation to Permanency Planning.....	43
	G. Decision Making Process.....	44
	H. Assurances.....	44
	I. Coordination with Tribes.....	44
	J. Child Welfare Demonstration Activities.....	45
	K. Intercountry Adoptions.....	45
	L. Adoption Incentive Payments.....	46
	M. Staff Training.....	46
	N. Evaluation and Technical Assistance.....	46
	Attachment A: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Plan, 2005-2009.....	47
	Attachment B: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Plan.....	53
	Education and Training Vouchers Program Plan	
	Attachment C: Child Safety and Permanency Division Organizational Chart.....	62
	Attachment D: Assurances for CFSP, CAPTA, CFI and ETV Programs.....	63
	Attachment E: Child and Family Service Budget (CFS-101, Parts I and II).....	64

MINNESOTA'S CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PLAN FOR CHILD WELFARE SERVICES AND PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES

FOR THE PERIOD COVERING 2005-2009

SECTION I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

This document presents Minnesota's combined application for funds for child welfare services under Title IV-B, 1 of the Social Security Act, and for family preservation and support services under Title IV-B, 2 of the Act. This application addresses the requirements of the program instructions PI-04-01 issued February 2, 2004 and the final rule published on November 18, 1996 in the Federal Register (61 FR 58632) which amends the federal regulations at 45 CFR 1355, 1356 and 1357.

A. SCOPE OF PLAN

Minnesota's combined child and family services plan describes the state's efforts to develop an integrated, culturally relevant, family-centered system of care and to build a comprehensive, coordinated continuum of child welfare services from prevention and protection through permanency. The document contains the following reports:

- Minnesota's five-year Child and Family Services Plan for Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families for FFY 2005-2009. The Child and Family Service Plan contains the required information on the Child Abuse and Neglect State grant program (known as the State Basic Grant) under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5101 et.seq.).
- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act State Plan
- Minnesota's application for the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, and Education and Training Vouchers Program.
- CFS-101, Parts I and II, Annual Budget Request and Annual Summary of Child and Family Services

B. ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDS

Minnesota meets the requirements for eligibility for funds. In addition to this consolidated, five-year Child and Family Services Plan, it is submitting the CFS-101, Parts I and II Budget Request and Estimated Expenditure Reports that meet the requirements under 45 CFS 1357.16.

C. ASSURANCES

Minnesota has attached signed assurance forms required for Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan, Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, Education and Training Voucher Program and the Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan in Attachment D at the end of this report. The assurances for the Child and Family Services Plan are listed in 45 CFR 1357.15(c) and Title IV-B sections 422(b)(10), 422(b)(12), 422(b)(14) and section 432(a)(4), 432(a)(7), and 432(a)(9). These assurances remain in effect during the period of the five-year Child and Family Services Plan.

D. PLANNING PROCESS

The Child and Family Services Plan was developed utilizing a planning process that included involvement and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders and community-based organizations; coordination with other federal and federally assisted programs serving children and families; and collection and analysis of a wide array of available information. The planning process resulted in the identification of at-risk or vulnerable populations, performance areas needing improvement, gaps in services and the efforts necessary to address these concerns. Priorities were identified and provided the framework for developing goals and objectives related to improved outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being for children and families.

E. STATE AGENCY ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAMS

The Minnesota Department of Human Services is one of several state agencies that has a significant impact on the lives of children in Minnesota. The Minnesota Department of Human Services administers health care financing, public assistance programs, child support enforcement, mental health programs, social services and child welfare services. The department establishes policy direction through legislation, policy interpretation and analysis. It oversees program development in areas that have the potential to affect thousands of Minnesota's children. Because Minnesota is a state supervised and county administered system, most child welfare services are financed by county funds.

To achieve its goals, the department works closely with each of Minnesota's 87 counties that prepare a biennial service plan to address the needs of children, adolescents and adults within the county. The service plan specifies outcomes to be achieved and general strategies to be employed. Beginning in 2006 service plans will include performance targets for each county to measure outcomes related to indicators of children's mental health, and child safety, permanency and well-being.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services carries out its responsibilities by:

- Providing general supervision to counties
- Allocating funds to each county with an approved service plan
- Providing technical assistance and evaluating county performance in achieving outcomes
- Providing necessary information and assistance to each county for establishing baselines and desired improvements on mental health, safety, permanency and well-being for children and adolescents
- Providing training, technical assistance and other support to each county board to assist in needs assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring of outcomes and service quality
- Using data collection, evaluation of service outcomes and the review and approval of county service plans to supervise county performance in the delivery of children and community services.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services is headed by a commissioner, appointed by the governor who serves as a member of the governor's cabinet. The commissioner has statutory authority to supervise the administration of human services in the state and delegates much of the day-to-day operation and coordination of programs to the various administrations within the department that are headed by assistant commissioners. Children and Family Services is the administration within the department that oversees and coordinates programs for children. Children and Family Services represents a recent merger of the children's services and economic and community supports administrations. This administrative organization provides an infrastructure that supports a holistic and integrated approach to meeting the needs of children and families in the social services system.

Children and Family Services has direct responsibility for programs such as child protection, family support and preservation, foster care and adoption, children's mental health, youth and adolescent programs, the Indian Child Welfare Act, and the state's Social Services Information System. In addition, Children and Family Services pulls together resources and expertise throughout the department to ensure positive outcomes for children at risk.

Within the Children and Family Services administration, the Child Safety and Permanency Division is the section that administers the state's child welfare programs. Attachment C is an organizational chart for the division that has primary responsibility for administering the Child and Family Services Plan.

The division administers the following programs funded under the Social Security Act:

- Title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2
- Title IV-E

- Title IV-E-IL (Independent Living Skills).
- and the:
- Social Services Block Grant under Title XX.

Special programs or discretionary grants administered by the Child Safety and Permanency Division include the following:

- Adolescent Services Grants
- Adoption Assistance
- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act
- Children's Justice Act
- Crisis Nursery Grants
- Indian Child Welfare Grants
- Parental Substance Abuse and Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Grants
- State Child Welfare Training System

In operating most of these programs, the department's primary role is to provide state supervision. County social service agencies provide direct services to children and families.

SECTION II. THE PLAN: BASIC ELEMENTS

A. VISION

Children in Minnesota will be safe from abuse and neglect and nurtured in healthy and stable families

To realize this vision the department's policies, practices, activities and allocation of resources will be directed toward achieving a child welfare system in which:

- Communities are engaged with child protection agencies as partners to protect children and support families.
- Families are engaged with the child protection agency and community as partners in addressing safety concerns.
- Children and families have access to a continuum of responses and services that are tailored to meet their unique needs.
- Children and families receive services necessary to address child safety and family stability.
- Children and families receive fair and equitable treatment and experience similar results regardless of race, ethnicity or where they live.

The department's vision is supported by service principles found in the Code of Federal Regulations [45CFR1355.25]. These service principles serve as a guide to the development, operation and improvement of the continuum of children and family services. These service principles include:

- Safety and well-being of children and of all family members are paramount.
- Services are focused on the family as a whole.
- Services promote the healthy development of children and youth, promote permanency and prepare youth for self-sufficiency.
- Services focus on prevention, protection or other short or long-term interventions.
- Services are timely, flexible, coordinated and accessible.
- Services are organized as a continuum designed to achieve measurable outcomes and are linked to a wide variety of supports.
- Services are community-based.
- Services are intensive enough and of sufficient duration to keep children safe and meet family needs.

B. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND MEASURES OF PROGRESS

The following goals, objectives, strategies and measures represent the culmination of the visioning, assessment, consultation/coordination and planning activities undertaken by the department in preparation of Minnesota's 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan. The plan reflects the continuation of initiatives already in progress and new approaches to achieving improved outcomes for children and families served by the child welfare system.

Priority areas identified in the goals and objectives of the five-year plan include:

- Improving performance on initiating assessments.
- Reducing the number of children in long-term foster care.
- Improving performance on foster care re-entry.
- Improving relative search practices.
- Enhancing a model of family-centered practice that promotes well-being, including thorough assessments of needs, family involvement in case planning and social worker contacts with children and families.

Overarching strategies to accomplish improvements fall into five broad categories and are reflected throughout the safety, permanency and well-being strategies, benchmarks and activities detailed in the plan.

- Implement state and local strategies to address disparities based on race and build local capacity for addressing cultural diversity.
- Clarify existing practice requirements, establishing acceptable standards and develop best practice guidance to improve front-line case practice.
- Develop a continuum of responses to reports of maltreatment and a continuum of placement and permanency alternatives to meet the individual needs of children and families.
- Engage families in case planning and encourage an active role in the care of their children.
- Build child welfare system capacity and involve communities and cultures in meeting needs of children and families.

The following tables represent a framework for integrating the Child and Family Services Plan with the performance goals and objectives of the federal Child and Family Service Review and Minnesota's continuing plan for program improvement. The performance goals and objectives from the Child and Family Service Review are not intended as measurements for specific strategies set forth in the Child and Family Services Plan. Rather, they provide a foundation for evaluating overall effectiveness of strategies and improvements in case practice and they provide a structure for tracking continuous quality improvement over the course of the next five years.

A description of the tables is provided to facilitate reading and interpretation of this document. Tables are divided into primary areas of safety, permanency, well-being and systemic factors. The first column in Tables 1, 2 and 3 is a statement of a performance goal or objective, and national standard indicators where applicable, expressed in the same terms as the outcomes and performance items of the Child and Family Service Review. Column two provides an existing measure of

performance on each goal and objective based on the findings from county quality assurance reviews conducted during 2003. Measure of performance is stated as a percentage of cases reviewed in which the goal/objective was rated as substantially achieved or as a strength in the 2003 reviews. In the instances of national standard indicators, the measure of performance is derived from the Social Service Information System and is based on the latest data available from 2002. The third column, titled "performance update" is left blank and reflects our plan to provide annual updates on performance on each of the goals, objectives and national standards. Once related strategies are implemented, it is expected that performance on goals, objectives and national standards will show improvement. The last column in these three tables lists the methods or process that will be used to measure performance.

Tables 1.1, 2.1, and 3.1 provide descriptions of the strategies that have been developed to achieve improved case practice, address a priority area identified during the planning process to achieve a more comprehensive and effective children and family services system or advance broader statewide initiatives. Benchmarks and activities with associated timelines are described for each strategy and will be used to monitor progress toward implementing the strategy. The fourth column provides a brief depiction of the inter-relatedness and overarching affects of implementing each strategy. It also identifies other plans, systems or initiatives that are involved in some part of implementing the strategy.

Table 4 defines a broad strategy for achieving improved performance on safety, permanency and well-being goals and objectives by using the quality assurance system (Minnesota Child and Family Service Reviews, MnCFSR) as a catalyst for continuous quality improvement efforts at the state level and in each of the 87 counties. Quality assurance provides a retroactive evaluation of county child welfare services and identifies changes that need to be made within the system to produce improved outcomes. Quality improvement involves the work of modifying the current system and providing the solutions necessary to manage and improve the system on a continuous basis.

Table 5 is a description of seven systemic factors that provide the child welfare infrastructure necessary to support achievement of improved outcomes. This table does not attempt to provide a framework for ongoing measurement or evaluation of systemic factors. Rather, it offers a synopsis of current and planned systemic supports and activities essential to successfully implementing the proposed strategies. Significant developments or changes in systemic factors will be updated in each annual report.

SAFETY: TABLE 1

Statement of Performance Goals/Objectives	2003 Performance Based on 2003 MnCF SR's	Performance Update Annual Progress Report	Methods of Measurement
1. Minnesota will improve performance on the Child and Family Service Review (CFSR) outcome, children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.	71.2%		MnCF SR
1.1. Investigations of reports of child maltreatment will be initiated in a timely manner, including a face-to-face observation of the child.	67.8%		MnCF SR SSIS
1.2. Children will not experience repeated maltreatment.	91.3%		MnCF SR
1.3. Of all children who are victims of determined maltreatment during a six-month review period, less than 6.1 percent will have another determined report within six months. (National Standard Indicator)	5.9% (2002)		AFCARS SSIS
1.4. The percentage of children who are the subject of determined maltreatment by a foster parent will be less than .57 percent. (National Standard Indicator)	.28% (2002)		AFCARS SSIS
2. Minnesota will improve performance on the CFSR outcome children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.	79.3%		MnCF SR
2.1. Services will be provided to families to protect children in the home and prevent removal.	84.4%		MnCF SR
2.2. Risk of harm to children will be identified and addressed throughout the entire service episode.	83.1%		MnCF SR

Strategies and Timelines for Achieving Safety Goals/Objectives
Table 1.1

Strategies	Benchmarks/Activities	Timelines Complete by	Correlated Systems, Goals and Objectives
<p>Increase community awareness of child maltreatment.</p>	<p>Revise and deliver training concerning mandated and voluntary reporting of child maltreatment to reflect information about the response continuum.</p> <p>Provide access to the Child Welfare Training System family assessment and services related training to community social service providers.</p> <p>Develop three additional county-based Citizen Review Panels that examine state and local child protection policies, procedures and practices.</p> <p>Work with the Children's Trust Fund to provide technical support for the development of community partnerships for child safety.</p>	<p>October 2005</p> <p>July 2004</p> <p>September 2006</p> <p>October 2006</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with MCWTS and Citizen Review Panels and Community Partnerships Division, CAPTA plan.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 1 and 2; Objectives 1.2 and 2.1; System Indicators 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 6.1.</p>

<p>Design/develop a child protection response continuum that increases community involvement in the prevention and early intervention of child maltreatment.</p>	<p>Expand use of Family Group Decision Making beyond family reunification to include placement prevention through safety and service planning and the broader engagement of community supports.</p> <p>Obtain grant or foundation aid to support a pilot program to connect families at risk of child maltreatment, who have been reported but not accepted by the child protection response system, with community based social service providers for assessment and services.</p> <p>Solicit and select pilot counties.</p> <p>Begin pilot implementation.</p> <p>Pilot a program to defer accepted reports of child maltreatment not alleging substantial child endangerment directly to community based social service programs for a safety assessment and services if needed.</p>	<p>October 2004</p> <p>July 2005</p> <p>October 2005</p> <p>January 2006</p> <p>July 2007</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with CAPTA plan.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 2 and 5; Objectives 2.1, 5.1, 5.2; System Indicators 5.1, 5.2, 6.2.</p>
<p>Assure that the assessment of families at risk of child maltreatment is fair and equitable across all racial, ethnic and cultural groups and identifies strengths as well as needs.</p>	<p>Conduct a validation study of the Structured Decision Making Family Risk Assessment tool as it applies to various racial, ethnic and cultural groups.</p> <p>Modify or change the assessment tool/protocol if so directed by the study findings and develop plans for implementation.</p> <p>Develop a formalized system of assessing protective factors as part of the safety and risk assessment.</p>	<p>December 2004</p> <p>July 2005</p> <p>July 2006</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with CAPTA plan.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 1 and 2; Objectives 1.2, 2.1, 2.2.</p>

<p>Integrate the family assessment and investigative child protection responses under a single statutory authority.</p>	<p>Prepare draft legislation that revises Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556 to reflect the practice shift toward a tailored, safety-focused engagement of families. Submit statute changes to the Minnesota State Legislature.</p> <p>Statute changes become effective.</p>	<p>January 2006</p> <p>August 2006</p>	
<p>Develop policies and protocols to ensure timely and appropriate responses to reports of maltreatment.</p>	<p>Seek technical assistance from the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment.</p> <p>Convene stakeholder advisory committee and clarify statutory timelines for face-to-face observation of the victim when responding to a report of maltreatment and complete recommendations.</p> <p>Develop plans for implementation and training of new timelines and associated requirements.</p> <p>Statute changes submitted to the Minnesota State Legislature.</p> <p>Statute changes become effective.</p>	<p>June 2004</p> <p>October 2004</p> <p>December 2004</p> <p>January 2006</p> <p>August 2006</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with CAPTA plan.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goal 1, Objectives 1.1, 1.2.</p>
<p>Develop policies and protocols to ensure consistent and appropriate responses to reports of maltreatment.</p>	<p>Convene screening criteria stakeholder advisory committee to create statewide culturally informed child maltreatment screening criteria that are effective, appropriate and consistently used by all county child protection agencies.</p> <p>Screening criteria guidelines are distributed to county agencies.</p>	<p>January to July 2005</p> <p>September 2005</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with CAPTA plan.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 1 and 2; Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 2.2; System Indicators 6.1.</p>

<p>Improve the child maltreatment response system's capacity to address the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and substance abuse.</p>	<p>Provide regional training forums for local child protection agencies concerning child exposure to methamphetamine labs and the impact of methamphetamine use on parenting capacity.</p>	<p>September 2004</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with MCWTS, Chemical Dependency Division and Children's Justice Initiative, CAPTA plan.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 2 and 5; Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 5.1, 5.2.</p>
	<p>Develop curriculum through the Child Welfare Training System that provides guidance for addressing the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and methamphetamine use.</p>	<p>April 2005</p>	
	<p>Work with the Chemical Dependency Unit of the Department of Human Services to identify and implement best practice approaches to addressing the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and parental substance abuse.</p>	<p>July 2006</p>	

PERMANENCY: TABLE 2

Statement of Performance Goals/Objectives	2003 Performance Based on 2003 MnCF SR's	Performance Update Annual Progress Report	Methods of Measurement
3. Minnesota will improve performance on the CFSR outcome, children will have permanency and stability in their living situations.	75.9%		MnCF SR
3.1. Children discharged from foster care will not experience a re-entry into care within 12 months of their discharge.	Plan to establish a baseline.		Baseline will be established by January 2005. Progress will be measured by MnCF SR.
3.2. Of all children who enter foster care, less than 8.6 percent will re-enter care within 12 months of a prior foster care placement. (National Standard Indicator)	27.3% (2002)		AFCARS SSIS
3.3. Children in foster care for 12 months or less will have two or less placement settings during their current placement episode.	Plan to establish a baseline.		Baseline will be established by January 2005. Progress will be measured by MnCF SR.
3.4. Of all children who have been in foster care less than 12 months, 86.7 percent or more will have no more than two placement settings. (National Standard Indicator)	87.9% (2002)		AFCARS SSIS
3.5. An appropriate permanency goal will be established for each child in foster care in a timely manner.	93.5%		MnCF SR
3.6. Children will be reunified with parents, or have a permanent placement with relatives within 12 months of removal from their home.	84.1%		MnCF SR
3.7. Of all children who are reunified with their parents or caretakers at the time of discharge from foster care, 76.2 percent or more are reunified in less than 12 months of removal from their home. (National Standard Indicator)	91.2% (2002)		AFCARS SSIS

3.8. Efforts are sufficient to achieve adoption for children within 24 months of removal from their home.	87.5%		MnCFSR
3.9. Of all children who exit care to a finalized adoption, 32 percent or more exit within 24 months of removal from their home. (National Standard Indicator)	38.7% (2002)		AFCARS SSIS
3.10. Long-term foster care will be considered as a permanency option when other more permanent goals are considered and ruled out and be subject to ongoing review.	87.5%		MnCFSR
4. Minnesota will improve performance on the CFSR outcome, the continuity of family relationships and connections will be preserved for children.	85.2%		MnCFSR
4.1. Children in foster care will be placed in close proximity to their parents.	95.9%		MnCFSR
4.2. Children in foster care will be placed with one or more siblings unless contrary to their needs.	94.6%		MnCFSR
4.3. Children in foster care will visit their parents and siblings consistent with their needs and their permanency goal.	86.7%		MnCFSR
4.4. Children's connections to relatives, friends and cultural practices will be preserved.	88.8%		MnCFSR
4.5. Children will be placed with relatives or diligent efforts will be made to locate and assess relatives as potential placements.	89.2%		MnCFSR
4.6. Services will be provided to promote and maintain relationships between parents and their children in foster care.	84.8%		MnCFSR

**Strategies and Timelines for Achieving Permanency Goals
Table 2.1**

Strategies	Benchmarks/Activities	Timelines	Correlated Systems, Goals and Objectives
<p>Improve the capacity of the child welfare system to meet the unique needs of American Indian children and families who are disparately represented in the child welfare system.</p>	<p>Develop and implement methods for improving/ensuring compliance with ICWA requirements.</p> <p>Collaborate with tribal courts to improve their access to federal funding sources.</p> <p>Convene with tribal agencies and representatives to study and propose alternative living arrangements for American Indian children that recognize unique cultural values while maintaining child safety and stability.</p> <p>Convene with tribal agencies and representatives to assess their child welfare system infrastructure and make recommendations for enhancing their capacity to provide a continuum of services.</p> <p>Consult with counties and tribes to produce collaborative and effective working agreements that are directed at meeting needs of children and families.</p>	<p>September 2005</p> <p>December 2005</p> <p>December 2006</p> <p>December 2007</p> <p>Ongoing activity</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with ICWA Advisory Council and Children's Justice Initiative.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 2, 3, 4, and 5; Objectives 2.2, 2.3, 3.1-3.10, 4.1-4.6, 5.1, 5.2; System Indicators 2.4-2.6, 5.1-5.4, 6.1-6.4.</p>

<p>Improve the capacity of the child welfare system to meet the unique needs of African American children and families who are disparately represented in the child welfare system.</p>	<p>Develop and implement an assessment process for reviewing specific decision making points and practices that contribute to disparity of African American children in the child protection system and specifically to placement and permanency.</p>	<p>July 2005</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with MCWTS, SSIS, Children's Justice Initiative.</p>
	<p>Design and develop a system to review, monitor and evaluate the impact of child welfare initiatives and permanency timeframes and decisions on African American children and their families.</p>	<p>December 2005</p>	<p>Activities support improvements in Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; Objectives 1.1, 2.1, 2.2, 3.1-3.10, 4.1-4.6, 5.1, 5.2; System indicators 5.1-5.4, 6.1-6.2.</p>
	<p>Build information system capacity in order to evaluate and report outcomes for African American children using SSIS and review indicators.</p>	<p>July 2005</p>	
	<p>Convene an advisory group to evaluate cultural competency training curriculum, delivery and participation. Make recommendations for revisions as indicated. (Coordinate with cross cultural competency training strategy under well-being).</p>	<p>December 2006</p>	
	<p>Collaborate with African American communities to research and identify effective, community-based approaches to working with African American families.</p>	<p>July 2005</p>	

<p>Improve the capacity of the child welfare system to meet the needs of adolescents in foster care and reduce the utilization of long-term foster care as a permanency disposition.</p>	<p>Increase the number of adoptions of adolescents who are under state guardianship through the Homecoming Project.</p>	<p>Ongoing activity</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with Chaffee Plan and Children's Justice Initiative.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in Goals 3 and 4; Objectives 3.5, 3.8, 3.10, 4.4; Systems Indicators 2.2-2.4, 7.4.</p>
	<p>Implement a federal Title IV-E waiver to study the impact of equalizing the benefit rates between adoption assistance, relative custody assistance and foster care programs on the outcomes for children in long-term foster care.</p>	<p>December 2007</p>	
	<p>Study the feasibility and potentialities of creating a single program and single benefit system that supports children in out-of-home placements and the families who are providing their care.</p>	<p>December 2007</p>	
	<p>Support adolescents in foster care with attention to promoting/maintaining lifelong connections and preparing for independent living: support formal mentoring programs, improve rates of completed Independent Living Plans, increase awareness and utilization of Education and Training Vouchers program.</p>	<p>October 2004 and ongoing</p>	
	<p>Implement best practices in permanency planning relative to long-term foster care, as defined in the guide issued in June 2003.</p>	<p>Ongoing activity</p>	
	<p>Achieve reduction in the rates of children placed in long-term foster care.</p>	<p>January 2006</p>	

Enhance and support involvement of families, including relatives and kin, in caring for and making decisions about their children.	<p>Implement statutory requirement to develop a best practices guide for conducting relative searches to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relative searches without delay. • Include both maternal and paternal relatives. • Specify that a relative who initially declines to be considered as a placement option be considered as a placement option at a later date. 	June 2005	Coordinate activities with Children's Justice Initiative. Activities support improvements in Goals 3, 4, 5; Objectives 3.1-3.10, 4.1-4.6, 5.1, 5.2.
	<p>Develop best practices guides for achieving and supporting reunification such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of needs and services. • Engaging families and children in case planning. • Identification and involvement of fathers in case planning and care of their children. • Visitation between parents and children. • Sibling placements. • Preserving connections. • Assessment of service array and resources. 	July 2006	
Reduce the rate of foster care re-entry and improve foster care stability.	<p>Provide for trial home visits as a disposition option.</p>	August 2005	Coordinate with Children's Justice Initiative and Minnesota counties. Activities support improvements in Goal 3; Objectives 3.1-3.4.
	<p>Continue partnership with individual counties to reduce Minnesota's foster care re-entry rates. Counties submitted plans to reduce their re-entry rate in May 2004 and will provide the first progress reports in August 2004.</p> <p>Continue work with National Resource Center on Foster Care and Permanency Planning to address foster care stability rates.</p>	<p>Ongoing activity</p> <p>Ongoing activity</p>	

Design and develop a continuum of placement and permanency responses that include alternatives and options to traditional foster care settings.	Study and propose a range of options/alternatives to placing children in foster care or emergency shelter facilities when responding to child maltreatment reports or when a safety issue is present.	December 2006	Activities support improvements in Goals 2 and 4; Objectives 2.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6.
	Develop standards and best practices guides that will improve decision making at key points in a child's placement experience.	December 2007	

WELL-BEING: TABLE 3

Statement of Performance Goals/Objectives	2003 Performance Based on 2003 MnCF SR's	Performance Update Annual Progress Report	Methods of Measurement
5. Minnesota will improve performance on the CFSR outcome, Families will have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.	58.1%		MnCF SR
5.1. The needs of children, their parents and foster parents will be adequately and appropriately assessed, identified and addressed.	67.4%		MnCF SR
5.2. Children and families will be actively involved in case planning.	66.1%		MnCF SR
5.3. Workers will visit with children on a schedule consistent with the child's needs and visits will focus on issues of case planning, safety and well-being.	72.8%		MnCF SR
5.4. Workers will visit with parents on a schedule consistent with the child's needs and visits will focus on issues of case planning, safety and well-being.	73.6%		MnCF SR
6. Minnesota will improve performance on the CFSR outcome, children will receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.	88.6%		MnCF SR
6.1. Children's educational needs will be assessed and addressed.	88.6%		MnCF SR
7. Minnesota will improve performance on the CFSR outcome, children will receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.	76.6%		MnCF SR
7.1. Children's physical health needs will be assessed and addressed.	82.1%		MnCF SR
7.2. Children's mental health needs will be assessed and addressed.	82.6%		MnCF SR

Strategies and Timelines for Achieving Well-Being Goals
Table 3.1

Strategies	Benchmarks/Activities	Timelines	Correlated Systems, Goals and Objectives
<p>Provide comprehensive assessments of child and family strengths and needs using assessment practices, protocols and tools that provide a basis for case planning and service provision.</p>	<p>Implement statewide use of the Child Well-Being tool to identify strengths and needs for children and document services offered.</p>	<p>September 2004</p>	<p>Coordinate activities with CAPTA plan, Community Partnerships Division.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in all goal and objective areas primarily: Goals 2, 5, 6, and 7; Objectives 2.1, 2.2, 5.1-5.4, 6.1, 7.1, 7.2.</p>
	<p>Support and monitor the requirement to refer children under the age of 3 who are subjects of determined maltreatment to early childhood screening for developmental delays.</p>	<p>August 2004</p>	
	<p>Establish statewide mental health screening process for children receiving child protective services to ensure early identification of mental health concerns and need for services.</p>	<p>July 2004</p>	
	<p>Develop statewide contact standards and content guidelines for social worker visits with parents and children receiving in-home or foster care services.</p>	<p>January 2006</p>	
	<p>Convene an advisory group to consider and recommend enhancements/revisions to the Strengths and Needs Assessment Instrument.</p>	<p>October 2006</p>	
	<p>Establish consistent and statewide use of the Strengths and Needs Assessment as a tool to inform and direct case planning and delivery of services.</p>	<p>December 2006</p>	

Provide services that are appropriate and adequate to meet the needs of children and families.	In consultation with a representative advisory committee, develop a practice guide regarding active efforts in case planning and service delivery for American Indian families.	September 2005	Coordinate activities with ICWA Advisory Council, CAPTA plan.
	Develop best practice standards and guidelines for family directed/centered case planning practices that are culturally relevant and promote family participation and involvement.	June 2006	Activities support improvements in all goal and objective areas, primarily Goals 2 and 5; Objectives, 2.2 and 5.2.
Develop and/or update curriculum and provide training that supports and improves culturally responsive and family centered practice.	Revise social worker and supervisor CORE and other specialized and related training curricula to provide a framework for family directed, strength-based social work practice. Curriculum development, revision and training delivery.	June 2006	Coordinate activities with MCWTS. Activities support improvements in all goal and objective areas.
	Convene an advisory group to develop/revise cross-cultural competency training with a focus on African American, American Indian, Hispanic, Southeast Asian and immigrant communities. Curriculum development and training delivery.	December 2006	
	Develop and deliver training as necessary to carry out strategies and activities of the child and family service plan.	Ongoing activity	

<p>Work with county agencies to conduct assessments of systems and practices that support effective approaches to meeting needs of culturally diverse populations</p>	<p>The Children of Color Initiative will work with the quality assurance process to identify counties that may need or want to participate in an assessment of cultural capacity.</p> <p>The Children of Color Initiative will provide technical support to five to six counties to develop local plans of action that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific strategies to increase access to support services by new immigrant families • Enhance capacity to communicate with new immigrant communities • Enhance capacity to serve clients from different cultural backgrounds • Enhance capacity to work with diverse communities in areas of prevention and early intervention. • Identify steps to address disparities at the local level. 	<p>Ongoing activity</p> <p>June 2009</p>	<p>Coordinate with quality assurance and training systems.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in all goals and objectives; System Indicators 3.4, 4.1-4.2, 5.1-5.4, 6.1-6.4, 7.4.</p>
<p>Facilitate, support and monitor assessment, case planning and case management activities through the Social Services Information System.</p>	<p>Complete enhancements to SSIS to accommodate use of assessment and screening tools, provide a method of tracking utilization, and documenting case activities.</p>	<p>Ongoing activity</p>	<p>Coordinate with SSIS.</p> <p>Activities support improvements in System Indicators 1.1-1.3.</p>

**Quality Assurance Reviews as a Strategy for Achieving Safety,
Permanency and Well-Being Goals**
Table 4

Strategies	Benchmarks/Activities	Timelines
<p>Assess the capacity and quality of county child welfare systems.</p>	<p>Each county will conduct a self-assessment that provides a thorough examination of child welfare infrastructure and capacity as a step in the Minnesota Child and Family Service Review process.</p> <p>Use results of county self-assessments to plan for systemic improvements or enhancements at the state and local level:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas needing improvement identified by the self-assessment are addressed in county program improvement plans. • Self assessment findings are communicated to appropriate units within the Minnesota Department of Human Services and integrated into planning and operations decisions. 	<p>Current and ongoing activity. All counties will complete this process within the next 5 years.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p>

<p>Assess adequacy and quality of county child welfare practice and service delivery related to the achievement and/or improvement of safety, permanency and well-being outcomes.</p>	<p>Conduct case reviews that focus on practice principles and service delivery conducive to achieving improved outcomes as a step in the Minnesota Child and Family Service Review process.</p> <p>Use results of case reviews to plan for case practice and service delivery improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas needing improvement identified in the case reviews are addressed in county program improvement plans. 	<p>Current and ongoing activity. All counties will participate in this process within the next five years.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p>
<p>Assure a process to address and/or resolve areas identified as needing improvement.</p>	<p>Each county will prepare a program improvement plan to address the areas identified as needing improvement as a step in the Minnesota Child and Family Service Review process.</p> <p>Counties will identify methods and processes to measure and track performance on areas needing improvement.</p> <p>State Quality Assurance (QA) staff will contact counties after a year of program improvement plan implementation to assess progress on goals.</p>	<p>Current and ongoing activity. All counties will complete this process within the next five years.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p>

<p>Promote/support case practice, service delivery and systemic factor improvements that contribute to achievement of improved safety, permanency and well-being outcomes.</p>	<p>Communicate results of county and statewide findings from Minnesota Child and Family Service Reviews with child welfare managers, supervisors and caseworkers.</p> <p>Use the Minnesota Child and Family Service Review process to identify systemic factors and child welfare practices that result in positive outcomes and share these observations statewide. (See activity described below)</p> <p>Provide counties with information about strategies for improving performance on safety, permanency and well-being outcomes and performance items. Include information about promising practices. (PIP Tips)</p> <p>Provide Web site access to tools, resources and technical assistance links for improving child welfare supervision. (Supervisor's Web site)</p> <p>Promote and support the use of data to improve supervision of case practice and achieve positive outcomes through regional quality assurance forums. Conduct four forums per year.</p> <p>Collaborate with Social Services Information System (SSIS) to provide training to child welfare supervisors on using SSIS to monitor performance on key indicators.</p>	<p>Current and ongoing activity. Reports are issued after each MnCF SR and on a quarterly and annual basis.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity. Reports are issued after each MnCF SR and on a quarterly and annual basis.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity. Monthly issuance.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p> <p>Current and ongoing activity.</p>
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SYSTEMIC FACTORS: Table 5

Systemic Factors	Descriptions of Systemic Supports/Activities
1. Statewide Information System	
1.1. Statewide system has the capacity to determine status, demographics, location and goals for all children in foster care.	Minnesota has a federally approved SACWIS system and is preparing for an AFCARS audit in May 2006. The statewide system continues to plan for and make enhancements as necessary to support case management activities and to provide reporting and monitoring capabilities. Current goals include improving the capacity to report on outcomes by race.
1.2. Information is accessible to state and county staff.	Data analysis and charting function is available to state and county staff. SSIS information downloads to central data base. Case specific information is available to those who require access.
1.3. Information is useful in carrying out state and county responsibilities.	Data analysis and charting functions allow the state and county to track performance on national standard indicators and on a number of statewide performance indicators. SSIS tools for management training support supervisors and are intended to improve outcomes. Plans to develop protocols for consistent statewide case documentation, including case organization, common titles of sections (naming protocols) and case notes completed by December 2005. SSIS is developing an Adoption Module that will support state adoption unit processes including electronic submission of adoption forms, Web-enabled administration of the Adoption Assistance Program and electronic maintenance of records.
2. Case Review System	
2.1. Each child in foster care has a written case plan with all required elements.	An out-of-home placement plan for each child in foster care is required by Minnesota Statute and supported on SSIS. Case planning is included as a Social Worker CORE Curriculum topic. Quality assurance reviews include oversight of this requirement.
2.2. Parents of foster children participate in developing case plans, identifying strengths and needs, determining goals, requesting specific services and evaluating progress related to their children.	Monitor through Minnesota Child and Family Service Reviews (MnCF SR). Strengthen engagement of families with children in out-of-home placements by developing best practice standards and guidance for family-centered practice. Training system will complete curriculum revisions to support improved family-centered practice. Statewide implementation of alternative response will help achieve improved family-centered practice.
2.3. A court or administrative review of each child's status every six months.	Statewide implementation of Children's Justice Initiative. Monitor through MnCF SRs.

2.4. Permanency hearings occur within 12 months of entering foster care.	Statewide implementation of Children's Justice Initiative. Monitor through MnCFSRs.
2.5. Permanency hearings promote timely and appropriate achievement of permanency goals.	Statewide implementation of Children's Justice Initiative. Monitor through MnCFSRs.
2.6. Foster pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers receive notice of an opportunity to be heard in any review or hearing for each child in their care.	Notice requirements are covered in the state's juvenile court rules and procedures. Statewide implementation of Children's Justice Initiative should result in improved practice. The state's largest county recently implemented an electronic reporting system that allows foster parents to submit reports to the court according to an approved format.
3. Quality Assurance System	
3.1. Standards are implemented to ensure that children in foster care placements are provided quality services that protect their health and safety.	Licensing standards apply to all residential care settings for children and juveniles. Out-of-home placement plans provide the structure for planning services to ensure health and safety. CFSP strategy is to develop and provide guidance on contact standards between social workers and children.
3.2. Quality assurance system helps ensure safety, permanency and well-being for children and families statewide.	MnCFSRs evaluate performance related to safety, permanency and well-being. County development of program improvement plans follow reviews. Reviews are completed in 20 counties per year.
3.3. Quality assurance system has the capacity to evaluate the adequacy and quality of the children and family service system.	MnCFSRs evaluate adequacy and quality of county child and family service systems. Counties complete self-assessments of the adequacy and quality of their children and family service system.
3.4. Quality assurance system has the capacity to produce information leading to program improvements.	Quality assurance is producing regular reports of performance on safety, permanency and well-being performance based on county reviews. Aggregate data and findings are reported in year-end reports. Ongoing program improvement communications are provided to county child welfare supervisors. Counties can track performance on national and state performance indicators through SSIS.
4. Staff and Provider Training	
4.1. Initial and ongoing training for child welfare staff is effective and includes the basic skills and knowledge required for their positions.	The Child Welfare Training System curriculum development and delivery is consistent with and supports goals and objectives of the child and family service plan.
4.2. Foster and pre-adoptive families receive training that addresses the skills and knowledge bases needed to carry out their roles and responsibilities.	The Child Welfare Training System offers ongoing access to foster and adoptive families. Innovative training approaches are being utilized to increase access to training opportunities.
5. Service array and resource development	

<p>5.1. Services are available to help children safely and appropriately return to families from which they were removed.</p>	<p>Family Group Decision Making is being expanded and supported in additional counties. Service adequacy and access is evaluated through the MnCFSR. Counties prepare biennial children and community service plans that describe services available in the county along with service gaps.</p>
<p>5.2. Services are available to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families.</p>	<p>Service adequacy and access is evaluated through the MnCFSR. Services are developed through Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and community partnerships activities. Counties prepare biennial children and community services plans that describe services available in the county along with service gaps.</p>
<p>5.3. Services are available to help children being placed for adoption, with a legal guardian or in some other planned, permanent, living arrangement.</p>	<p>Service adequacy and access is evaluated through the MnCFSR. Public/private partnerships with Target Corporation, Eastman Kodak and Collaboration to AdoptUSKids; Federal Adoption Opportunities Activities grant and the Homecoming Project. The Child Safety and Permanency Division biennial plan includes a priority project to increase efficiency of adoption services.</p>
<p>5.4. All above services are accessible to families and children statewide.</p>	<p>Continue efforts to ensure and support statewide access to services.</p>
<p>6. Agency responsiveness to the community</p>	
<p>6.1. Development of the Child and Family Service Plan includes consultation and coordination with community stakeholders. Their concerns are addressed in planning and operations, and stakeholders are involved in evaluating and reporting progress on agency goals.</p>	<p>See descriptions of planning process and consultation in sections 1D and 2F of the Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP). Development of the current CFSP included consultation with over 20 community stakeholder groups. Citizen review panels represent community stakeholder evaluation activity. The division plans to establish a standing advisory component to the CFSP, annual progress, CFSR and program improvement planning.</p>
<p>6.2. County services are coordinated with services and benefits of other public and private agencies.</p>	<p>Continue current public/private partnerships and continue to provide support to county children and family services and children's mental health collaboratives. Coordinate state and county planning efforts.</p>
<p>6.3. Agreements with other agencies to perform IV-E or IV-B functions are monitored for compliance and accuracy.</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>
<p>6.4. Status of American Indian children is appropriately determined and steps are taken to ensure ICWA compliance.</p>	<p>See section 3I of the plan on ICWA compliance and strategies intended for improvement.</p>
<p>7. Foster and adoptive home licensing, approval and recruitment</p>	

<p>7.1. Standards for foster family homes, adoptive homes and childcare agencies are established and maintained.</p>	<p>Licensing Rule 2960.0010 to 2960.3340, the Umbrella Rule was promulgated in 2003 and combined Department of Human Services and Corrections licensing rules that set standards governing children/juvenile residential care centers. This rule includes many improvements to the previous residential licensing standards. One home study meets requirements for licensing and approval of foster and adoptive homes.</p>
<p>7.2. Licensing standards are applied equally to all foster and adoptive homes and institutions.</p>	<p>New Umbrella Rule establishes a standard set of criteria for all licensed foster and residential care settings.</p>
<p>7.3. Criminal background checks are conducted for state and privately approved foster and adoptive parents and institutions.</p>	<p>Criminal background checks are a requirement in the Umbrella Rule, which includes licensing requirements for state and privately approved foster, adoptive and residential care.</p>
<p>7.4. Recruitment and retention efforts for foster and adoptive families representing the ethnic and racial diversity of children needing placement.</p>	<p>Continue recruitment efforts at both the state and local levels. Continue activities of the four-year grant for regional recruitment initiative. Use activities during National Foster Care month to enhance recruitment efforts. State statutes require special child specific efforts for recruitment of foster and adoptive families.</p>
<p>7.5. Recruitment of adoptive families across the state or other jurisdictional boundaries.</p>	<p>Support inter and intra state placement of children for adoption and/or transfer of legal guardianship. Continue support of adoptions across the state through the Minnesota Adoption Exchange, Minnesota's Waiting Children's book, monthly meetings of adoption workers from across the state and a state administered Adoption Assistance program.</p>

C. BASELINE INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS

In developing the 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan, the Minnesota Department of Human Services reviewed and analyzed a wide array of state and county data that included indicators of well-being of children and families, the needs of children and families, and the nature, scope and adequacy of existing child and family social services. The data review and analysis was fundamental to the planning process and identifying priorities. Throughout the five-year period, the department will utilize existing evaluation processes and sources of data to update information on performance goals, objectives, and national standards. Progress toward implementing strategies and meeting benchmarks, and enhancing service needs and organizational capacities necessary to achieve progress on goals and objectives, will be updated in each annual report.

Primary sources of data included:

- Progress reports on the goals and objectives of the 1999-2004 Child and Family Service Plan.
- Findings from the 2001 federal Child and Family Service Review.
- Quarterly progress reports on Minnesota's Program Improvement Plan.
- Findings from Minnesota Child and Family Service Reviews, quality assurance process,

calendar year 2003.

- Findings and recommendations from the African American and American Indian Disparities studies.
- Child welfare reform research and findings.
- Reports from the Child Mortality Review Committee and Citizen Review Panels.
- Data on federal and state performance indicators from the Department's Research, Planning and Evaluation Unit generated by the statewide Social Service Information System.
- Statewide program and fiscal data on family preservation and family support services.
- Information received through the consultation process.

D. CONSULTATION

The process for the internal and external consultation process provided for a broad and active involvement of stakeholders from across the spectrum of the children and family service delivery system. A series of internal meetings were held that included representation from: child protective services, foster care and adoption, reunification services, family preservation and support services, adolescent services, Indian Child Welfare, Children's Justice Act, Children's Justice Initiative, Citizen Review panels, Child Mortality review committee, statewide information system, planning and evaluation, training system and quality assurance. These internal meetings represented first stages in data analysis, priority setting and goal development for the Child and Family Service Plan. Work teams, created through the internal meetings, prepared written proposals for goals, objectives, strategies and initiatives. These work teams produced a 'draft' plan that was used in consultations with external stakeholders.

Additional consultation was conducted through a number of interactive presentations with key constituency and stakeholder groups representing: other divisions/administrations within the state agency; county social services administrators and staff; Tribes; an array of community-based agencies and organizations, both public and private; parents; youth; professional and advocacy organizations; and representatives of other federal programs. A small number of stakeholder groups, who were unable to schedule time for presentations, were consulted and given the opportunity to provide input through a review and comment process. Over 20 consultations were conducted with 200 participants.

The consultation process largely validated many of the priorities, goals, objectives and strategies proposed for the five-year plan. In other instances, the consultation process resulted in modifications, enhancements and/or clarifications to proposed goals, objectives and strategies. The department will continue to involve a wide range of stakeholders in meeting the goals and objectives during the operational period of the Child and Family Services Plan and also for developing the Annual Progress and Services Report.

Stakeholder groups consulted in the development of the 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan:

- Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council
- Chisago County Citizen Review Panel

- DHS Partnerships for Child Development (Part C programs, children's mental health, Children's Trust Fund, Community Action Programs, Head Start, child care, housing)
- Ramsey County Citizen Review Panel
- DHS Family and Children's Research, Planning and Evaluation Unit
- Winona County Citizen Review Panel
- Metro County Child Protection Supervisor Group
- Child Welfare Training System Strategic Planning Committee
- Minnesota Child and Family Service Review Coordinator
- Washington County Citizen Review Panel
- Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators, Children's Subcommittee
- Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota Parent Leadership Team
- Ombudspersons for Families, (individuals who advocate for the needs of African American, Asian, Chicano/Latino, and American Indian families)
- Children's Defense Fund
- Children's Justice Initiative
- Social Service Information System
- Community Provider Organizations (representing providers for communities of color, homeless and runaway youth, and child abuse prevention and treatment)
- Advisory Board for Southeast Asian Families
- Commission on Minnesota African American Children
- County Partnership Group (DHS and county social service administrators)
- Department of Corrections
- DHS Licensing Division
- DHS Transitions to Economic Stability Division (Title IV-A, Food Stamps, economic supports).

Although not specifically consulted during the development of the Child and Family Services Plan, the work of a number of other ongoing and special advisory groups contributed to the content of this plan and aided in its developments, including:

- American Indian Disparities Initiative Advisory Committee
- African American Disparities Initiative Advisory Committee
- Advisory Committee to Reduce Foster Care Reentry and Improve Placement Stability
- National Resource Center for Foster Care and Permanency Planning
- Statewide Advisory Committee to Reduce the Use of Long-Term Foster Care
- Advisory Group to the Initiative to Integrate Alternative Response with Traditional Child Protection.

E. SERVICE COORDINATION

Minnesota's child welfare system is a state supervised, county administered system. Much of the service coordination that is essential to clients takes place at the local level. Coordination of service takes place informally through cooperative working relationships among local service providers, and

formally through 'wraparound' delivery systems, interdisciplinary team models of care, case management services and participation in collaboratives. Many counties are formal partners in either family service collaboratives or children's mental health collaboratives. By law, these collaboratives include membership of human services, health, mental health and education providers and feature development and use of:

- Consolidated intake forms
- Coordinated case management
- Pooled financial resources
- Common outcomes indicators and performance targets
- Integrated service models
- Interdisciplinary training for front line practice.

Minnesota counties evaluate and describe community strengths and resources available to improve service coordination as a requirement of their biennial Children and Community Services Act plan.

The department provides support to service coordination efforts through continued efforts to achieve linkages between the Social Service Information System and other statewide automated systems. Minnesota Data Practices laws allow for information sharing between collaborative partners and agencies who are part of the child welfare delivery system in the provision of services to children and families when necessary.

F. SERVICES

Minnesota has a continuum of public and private children and family services. This service continuum includes: family support services; family preservation services; child welfare services, including child abuse and neglect prevention; intervention and treatment services and foster care; and services to support family reunification, adoption, kinship care, independent living, or other permanency living arrangements as outlined in the final rule (45 CFR 1357.15 (n)).

The form *Annual Summary of Child and Family Service (CFS-101, Part II)* shows what the various expenditures for these programs are. It also shows information for each service described by:

- The population to be served.
- The geographic areas where services will be available.
- The estimated number of children to be served.
- The estimated expenditure for these services from federal, state, local, and donated sources, including Title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2, and the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act program.

The following is a description and definition of the services provided by the state and the county agencies. The information is taken from the 2003 update of the *Budgeting, Reporting and Accounting for Social Services Manual*. The numbering corresponds with the first column on the CFS-101.

1. **Prevention and Support Services (Family Support).** Services include: information and referral, community education and prevention, health-related services, housing services, social and recreational services, home-based support services, homemaking services, individual counseling, respite care, group counseling, family group decision making, approved pilot projects, local collaboratives, adaptive aids, supplies or special equipment, adolescent life skills training, specialized case management, Community Alternative Care (CAC), Community alternatives for Disabled Individuals (CADI) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI).
2. **Protective Services.** Services include child protection assessment and investigation, consisting of all activities from initial reports of maltreatment to determining whether maltreatment occurred and whether child protection services are needed; and, alternative response assessment, which consists of all activities from initial reports of maltreatment to assessing immediate safety concerns, completing risk assessments and developing a service plan if indicated.
3. **Crisis Intervention (Family Preservation).** Services include child welfare assessment, court-related services, family-based crisis services, family-based counseling services, family-based life management skills, family services for alternative response program, family group decision making, respite care, general case management, children's mental health, family community support services, case management (Rule 79); child general case management, children's mental health family-based services and therapeutic support of foster care.
4. **Time-limited Family Reunification.** Services include 32 Family Group Decision Making projects.
5. **Adoption Promotion and Support.** Services include the Minnesota Adoption Support and Preservation program, a coordinated system to provide post adoption information and support to individuals and agencies across the state.
6. **Foster Care Maintenance.** Services include child foster care, treatment foster care, Rule 8 group homes, correctional facilities, child shelters, and Rule 5 child residential treatment.
7. **Adoption Subsidy Payments.** This category includes payments for Relative Custody Assistance, a state-funded program.
8. **Independent Living Services.** This category includes services provided under the Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally or Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and homeless and runaway youth services. See the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program plan for a detailing of services found in Attachment B included in this document.
9. **Foster Parent Training and Recruitment.** Services include all activities by county human service agencies and by the department's recruitment grantees.
10. **Adoption Parent Training and Recruitment.** Services include the Public/Private Adoption

Initiative service grants and county agency provided adoption services.

11. **Childcare Related to Employment and Training.** Services include Basic Sliding Fee Child care assistance and child care assistance for participants in the Minnesota Family Investment Program.

Gaps in the continuum of services were identified through the 2003 child welfare quality assurance reviews and through the Child and Family Services Plan consultation process. Service array was generally considered adequate and service gaps were typically related to availability and/or access. Some services are in short supply and children and families wait to receive services. Children's mental health services, in-home family based services and some specialized chemical dependency treatment services were identified in this category. Other gaps are related to a shortage of culturally diverse service providers. This gap was identified most often in suburban and rural counties. Statewide, however, there is a growing challenge to meet the needs of diverse populations and non-English speaking children and families. Access to services is also impacted by availability of support services such as transportation, childcare and by adequacy of safe and affordable housing. Availability of these supportive services is highly dependent on county resources and budgets and varies widely across counties.

G. FAMILY PRESERVATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES AND LINKAGES

The services and funds provided under the Family Support and Preservation Program, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, and the Chafee Foster Care Independence programs are integrated into the broad continuum of supports and services available to families and children in Minnesota. Social service, health and education agencies are at the heart of this system at both the state and local level. Family Service and Children's Mental Health Collaboratives have been instrumental in coordinating and integrating service delivery.

Development and expansion of family preservation and support services, and linkages to other services in the county children and family services continuum have been further facilitated by the 2003 Children and Community Services Act. The Children and Community Services Act consolidated 15 separate children and community services grants, including family preservation and support grants, into a single fund allocated to counties based on an approved biennial service agreement. The service agreement is based on local assessment of needs and must include attention to priorities consistent with family preservation and support. This consolidated fund eliminates planning for service delivery based on categorical requirements, gives counties increased flexibility to ensure better outcomes for children and their families and adolescents in need of services and permits increased coordination and integration of services.

H. SERVICES IN RELATION TO SERVICE PRINCIPLES

Minnesota's children and family services are designed to assure the safety and protection of children as well as the preservation and support of families. This plan sets forth a vision for a child welfare system, supported by the service principles in 45 CFR 1355.25, serving as a guide to the development, operation and ongoing improvements to the continuum of children and family

services over the next five years.

I. SERVICES IN RELATION TO PERMANENCY PLANNING

Minnesota makes a continuum of services related to permanency available to children and families. These services are available statewide and delivered through county social services agencies. The department assures provision of services through legislation, biennial service agreements with counties and quality assurance reviews. It supports service delivery through allocating funds, program development, policy development, training, data collection and analysis, and the Social Service Information System.

Services are available to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families. These services primarily include prevention and support, protection and crisis intervention services. Services are available to help children safely and appropriately return to families from which they were removed. These services primarily include time-limited family reunification services. Services are available to help children placed for adoption with a legal guardian or in some other planned, permanent living arrangement. These services primarily include adoption promotion and support and independent living services.

Goals, objectives and strategies set forth in this plan demonstrate a commitment to developing and supporting effective approaches and achieving improved outcomes in preventing placements, reunifying children with their families and attaining permanence for children. Strategies to ensure early identification and involvement of relatives in caring for children, include expansion of Family Group Decision Making, a continuum of responses to reports of maltreatment and earlier access to community-based services. Attention to strengthening family centered practice will provide a solid foundation to meeting permanency provisions.

In addition to goals, objectives and strategies in the plan, the department is involved in other initiatives to improve capacity to meet the permanency provisions for children and families. A Department of Human Services Concurrent Permanency Planning workgroup has recently completed work on a *Concurrent Planning Practice Guide*. The guide will be distributed to county social service agencies and court systems in 2004, accompanied by a series of interactive television training sessions.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Supreme Court are partners in a statewide Children's Justice Initiative. This initiative is responsible for implementing best practices in Minnesota's juvenile courts, based on the National Council of Juvenile Family Court Judges Resource Guidelines: *Improving Court Practice in Child Abuse and Neglect Cases* and is instrumental to meeting many of the permanency provisions for children and families according to the requirements in sections 422(b)(10). Activities of this initiative include: training and ongoing technical assistance regarding permanency laws and concurrent planning; efforts to improve processing of juvenile cases so the court is poised to make timely decisions about permanency for children; support for judicially driven multi-disciplinary teams at the local level; identifying and developing a pool of judicial experts on permanency; adding information regarding permanency cases to Minnesota's Judicial College; data collection and analysis focused on identifying areas

needing improvement.

Achievement of permanency requires close partnerships not only between the department and the county social service agencies, but also between the department and the tribes involved with Indian children and families. In Minnesota, both the county social services agency and the reservation/tribe to which the child belongs serve most Indian children who require child welfare services. County social service agencies provide or arrange for child protection investigations and provide funding for placements. They are, therefore, responsible for assuring foster care protections, such as development of case plans, provision of case reviews, and preparation for permanency hearings.

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa has a unique legal status in Minnesota. It provides child protection and other child welfare services on the reservation. It receives some funding for these positions from the county agency and it uses state rules (to which the tribe is not subject) as guidelines for service provision.

Minnesota's Children's Justice Initiative is sponsoring state and tribal court training events. These efforts seek guidance on meeting requirements of the Indian Child Welfare Act and Adoption Safe Family Act and to achieve consensus on best practices for assuring timely permanency decisions consistent within the constructs of the laws.

J. DECISION MAKING PROCESS

In Minnesota's social service system, funding for family support services is provided by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to county agencies. Effective in 2003, funding was provided to counties in a consolidated Children and Community Services grant. This consolidated fund provides for increased flexibility for planning and use of funds at the county level, including allowances that funds may be used for services performed by professionals or nonprofessionals, including the person's natural supports in the community. This flexibility is conducive to supporting needs of children within the context of their families and communities, a key element of community-based services.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services enters into a biennial service agreement with each county and allocation of children and community services funds is contingent on an approved service agreement. The service agreement includes a description of the needs of children, adolescents and adults within the county, and includes an assessment of community strengths and resources available to address those needs. The service agreement specifies outcomes to be achieved and general strategies to be employed, including any partnerships that will be established or strengthened. All of the service agreement requirements must be developed with a process that includes public input. This planning process and community input requirement helps ensure a local community role in identifying and planning services within the county, a key element of community-based services.

K. FUNDS FOR FAMILY PRESERVATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Minnesota has allocated Title IV-B Subpart 2 funds for the four primary service areas. The distribution of allocated federal funds for FY2005 is as follows: family support, 20 percent; family preservation, 20 percent; time-limited family reunification, 20 percent; adoption promotion and support services, 20 percent; and, planning and service coordination, 20 percent.

Family preservation and family support services include alternative response programs available in all 87 counties. Alternative response assessments and family services for alternative response are funded through Title IV-B 2. Expansion of the Family Group Decision Making process as a service for family support and family preservation will also be funded with Title IV-B 2 funds. Family Group Decision Making is currently available in 29 counties and provided by three Minnesota Tribes.

Family Group Decision Making, a **time-limited reunification service** is funded in 29 counties and three Minnesota tribes. The Minnesota Adoption Support and Preservation program, an **adoption promotion and support service** is funded under Title IV-B 2 and is available statewide. This service is a coordinated system of supports to individuals and agencies across the state. The system provides post adoption information and support through a "warm-line," State Adoption Exchange Web site, Family Voices newsletter, development of adoption group parent leaders, training events, support of adoption groups, parent liaisons and adoption awareness campaigns.

Planning and service coordination activities funded by Title IV-B 2 funds include administrative support at the state level, evaluation of effectiveness of family support and preservation, time-limited reunification services, training of county staff and community partners, and consultation and program development.

Distribution of funds is consistent with the needs and priorities identified as part of the plan development process.

L. STAFF TRAINING, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, AND EVALUATION

Staff training

The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System is a comprehensive, competency-based, in-service training system that provides culturally responsive, family-centered, job-related training for county and tribal child welfare social workers, economic support staff, supervisors, directors and managers. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System is divided into five service regions across 87 counties, represented by five area training managers. These area training managers address specific county and tribal training concerns in each part of the state. They work with child welfare and child protection workers and supervisors to ensure counties have access to regional, job-specific training.

The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System is a joint effort of the Minnesota Association of County Social Service Administrators and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Both organizations fund the program, an arrangement that provides the funds to match federal financial participation. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System is affiliated with the University of

Minnesota School of Social Work, which is responsible for managing the five area training centers and providing selected curriculum development/writing under a contract with the department.

The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System provides training based on needs that are determined by Individual Training Needs Assessments, statutory requirements, department initiatives and priorities, and county level input. Curriculum development, revision and/or delivery of training supports a number of the goals and objectives in this plan, and are priorities for the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System.

Minnesota law requires that child protection social workers attend CORE social work training, within the first six months of employment. The curriculum is divided into five training modules, providing the fundamental and essential knowledge and skills necessary for child welfare casework. The training is 96 hours over 16 days, and is offered several times per year throughout the state.

Experienced child protection workers are required to develop a plan to receive at least 15 credit hours of social work training per year. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System provides basic and advanced courses for *specialized* skills training for staff who work in specific program areas or have a training need identified through their training needs assessment. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System provides basic and advanced *related* skills training that covers a wide array of relevant child welfare practice issues. Specialized and related skills trainings are offered on an ongoing basis throughout the state. Most specialized and related skills training courses are offered in one or two day intervals. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System offers over seventy specialized and related skills training courses.

The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System also offers an Administrator Core Skills Training Curriculum to provide the fundamental and essential knowledge and skills necessary for child

welfare supervisors and managers. The training is 72 hours, over 12 days, and is offered periodically throughout the state.

Minnesota Child Welfare Training System statewide training schedules are issued quarterly through the Minnesota Department of Human Services public web site. The training schedules provide a description of each training, including a summary of training content, objectives and intended audience; brief description of the proposed trainer; and time, location and day/hours of the training.

A new initiative of the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System is a combined effort with the quality assurance unit to develop a data base system. This system will enhance the ability to collect, store and disseminate information on performance issues based on findings from county quality assurance reviews. The Minnesota Child Welfare Training System will utilize data on performance in selected counties or groups of counties to target training interventions, revise current curriculums or create new curriculums where a consistent need is identified.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services also provides IV-E eligible training activities with a primary goal to build a culturally competent group of professionals who are representative of the

diverse populations served by social service agencies. Two programs are currently available and one program is proposed for the fall of 2004.

The University of Minnesota provides social work education at the master's and doctoral levels, assisting practitioners to develop advanced knowledge of the problems surrounding, and policies regarding children at risk of out-of-home placement. Approximately 40 master's level and two doctoral level students participate in the program on an annual basis. Most recently, 23 percent of participants were students representing diverse racial and ethnic populations.

The University of Minnesota-Duluth offers a master's level degree in social work to increase the pool of master's level professionals with a special focus on recruiting American Indian students to the program. In the most recent year, 33 students were enrolled, 10 were American Indian students.

In a collaborative effort between the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota State Colleges System and the Department of Human Services, a IV-E Bachelor of Social Work proposal to fund a bachelor's level of social work program was submitted in the fall of 2003. This program will focus on increasing the number of social workers particularly in rural areas. The BSW program proposal was reviewed by the Administration of Children and Families and received preliminary approval in April 2004. Administration of Children and Families requested that this information be included in the state's IV-B plan to be formally approved.

Technical Assistance

State staff will provide technical assistance to:

- County social services staff in the areas identified under the goals and objectives section as well as maintenance efforts.
- Community-based service providers and contractors.
- Foster care and adoptive families and other placement providers; and
- Adoption agencies that are part of new partnerships.

State staff are available to give technical assistance to county social service staff upon request.

Evaluation

The department works with grantees to identify key work performance measures and includes them in their grant contracts. Specific evaluation activities are related to a number of initiatives, including Alternative Response, Concurrent Permanency Planning, Family Support and Preservation Services and Family Group Conferencing.

Other evaluation activities in support of the goals and objectives of the Child and Family Services Plan include:

- Evaluation of pilot projects to expand the continuum of child protection response that includes connecting families not accepted by the child protection response system to community-based services, and connecting families accepted by the child protection response system, but without alleged substantial endangerment, directly to community-

based programs for assessment and services.

- Validation study of the Structured Decision Making Family Risk Assessment tool as it applies to various racial, ethnic and cultural groups.
- Identification and evaluation of barriers to achieving timely and appropriate response to reports of maltreatment with assistance from the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment.
- Research best practices models for addressing the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and substance abuse with a focus on the challenges related to exposure to methamphetamines.
- Evaluation of cultural competency training curriculum, delivery and participation.
- Research and identification of effective, community-based approaches to working with African American families.
- Study the impact of equalizing various out-of-home care benefit rates on outcomes for children in long-term foster care.
- Study the feasibility of creating a single program and single benefit system for supporting children in out-of-home care.
- Continue evaluation of factors contributing to, and factors that reduce re-entry into foster care.

M. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Quality assurance programs assess the quality of services under the Child and Family Services Plan and assure that measures are taken to address identified problems. Some of these activities include:

- Minnesota Child and Family Service Reviews: a systemic assessment and case review process that evaluates the adequacy and quality of county child and family services. Areas identified as needing improvement are addressed in a county program improvement plan. Findings and data collected from individual county and cumulative statewide review findings are used to guide state and county agency decisions around resource development, technical assistance and training.
- Child mortality review: annual reports and ongoing recommendations are incorporated into statewide planning and operations decisions.
- Citizen review panels: annual reports and recommendations are incorporated into statewide planning and operations decisions.
- Establishing specific performance measures: the Children and Community Services Act contains a provision for establishing performance targets for seven indicators of children's mental health, safety, permanency and well-being. Baseline performance will be determined by 2005 data and counties will plan for improved outcomes in their biennial service agreements.
- Licensing standards: govern all child care and child/juvenile residential care settings. Licensing activities provide enforcement of licensing standards and ensure compliance with all applicable rules and statutes. Licensing deficiencies are addressed with corrective actions or negative licensing actions.

N. DISTRIBUTION

Upon request, the Minnesota Department of Human Services will make available to all interested parties, copies of the Child and Family Services Plan and the Annual Progress and Services Reports. A notice of the availability of the plan will be published in the *State Register*.

SECTION III. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

The following information addresses requirements outlined in the program instructions for the Child and Family Services Plan (ACFY-CB-PI-04-01).

A. REQUIREMENTS

Minnesota's Child and Family Services Plan and the final report conform to the requirements of 45 CFR 1357, and title IV-B, subparts 1 and 2 and section 477 of the Act. This document includes the final report of the 1999-2004 Child and Family Services Plan, the FY 2005-2009 Child and Family Services Plan, and the Child and Family Services-101 and includes information on:

- Child welfare services
- Family support services
- Family preservation services
- Time-limited family reunification services
- Adoption promotion and support services
- Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Services
- Chafee Foster Care Independence Program and Education and Training Vouchers.

B. STATE AGENCY ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM

This information is found in Section I, General Provisions, Part E.

C. CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES CONTINUUM

This information is found in Section II, The Plan: Basic Elements, Parts G and H.

D. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

This information is found in Section II, The Plan: Basic Elements, Part H and M.

E. ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR SERVICES

This information is found in CFS-101, Part 1 in Attachment E.

F. SERVICES IN RELATION TO PERMANENCY PLANNING

This information is found in Section II, The Plan: Basic Elements, Part K.

G. DECISION MAKING PROCESS

This information is found in Section II, The Plan: Basic Elements, Part L.

H. ASSURANCES

Assurances and certifications necessary for plan approval for each program are found in Attachment E.

I. COORDINATION WITH TRIBES

On June 18, 1998, the Tribal-State Agreement was signed by the Commissioner of Human Services, David Doth, and by the chairpersons of the 11 Minnesota Tribes and Bands. The department maintains an active role with the Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council (Minnesota Statutes section 260.835).

The department has also revised the Indian Child Welfare section of the department's *Social Services Manual* in collaboration with representatives of the Reservations and the Minnesota Attorney General's office. The manual sets forth the procedures to be followed by county social service staff when an American Indian child becomes involved with child protective services. Indian Child Welfare Act requirements and procedures to ensure compliance are supported by the statewide Social Service Information System in a document titled Indian Child Welfare Act/Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act Social Worker Checklist. This feature allows appropriate documentation of all case activities starting with intake and access to forms that help counties meet Indian Child Welfare Act requirements.

Basic, advanced and specialized training on the Indian Child Welfare Act has been provided by the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System since 2000. Training covers the history and requirements of the Federal Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act of 1985, the Tribal-State Agreement of 1998 and the *Indian Child Welfare Social*.

The department continues to fund family preservation and reunification services and special focus grants to the 11 Indian tribes and bands, and four urban American Indian agencies. One grant has been awarded to the Indian Child Welfare Law Center for legal services to Indian families. The annual amount of the grant is \$2,612,440.

In 1999, a Compliance Review Team was established for referrals alleging noncompliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act. The Compliance Review Team members represent the Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council, the Ombudsperson for American Indian Families, Minneapolis American Indian Center Indian Child Welfare Court Monitor, county social services agencies, private child placing agencies and Minnesota Department of Human Services. Since the inception, 32 cases have been reviewed for noncompliance to the Indian Child Welfare Act. The team submits a decision of compliance or noncompliance to the involved agencies, with a request for a plan if the case is noncompliant.

Department staff are charged with providing technical assistance for Indian Child Welfare activities and other support as needed to improve compliance, in providing services to American Indian

children and families. The department also receives Indian Child Welfare noncompliance reports from biological parents and other extended family members, tribal staff, county staff and other private agency staff.

Both the county social services agency and the reservation/tribe to which the child belongs serve most Indian children who require child welfare services. County social service agencies provide or arrange for child protection investigations and provide funding for placements. They are, therefore, responsible for assuring the foster care protections, such as development of case plans, provision of case reviews, and preparation for permanency hearings.

The Red Lake Band of Chippewa has a unique legal status in Minnesota. It provides child protection and other child welfare services on the reservation. It receives some funding for these positions from the county agency and it uses state rules (to which the tribe is not subject) as guidelines for service provision.

J. CHILD WELFARE WAIVER DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITIES

This section is not applicable to Minnesota.

K. INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS

Minnesota Statutes, section 257.05 requires the commissioner's consent for the importation, domestic or international, of any child into Minnesota for the purpose of adoption. The statute requires assurances of the suitability of the home and requires the Commissioner to protect the child's interests until the child reaches the age of 18 or is legally adopted. Minnesota Statutes, section 259.60, subdivision 3 requires full faith and credit be given to any post-adoption reporting requirements of the county of the child's origin. The statute also recognizes the validity of intercountry adoptions. All children adopted from other countries or brought into Minnesota from other countries are to receive the full benefit of services identified in the child welfare case plan to meet the critical needs of the child.

The department's adoption unit works closely with the licensed adoption agencies and the Immigration and Naturalization Services to ensure compliance with statutes. County social services agencies provide child welfare services as appropriate and needed. The resources of the Minnesota Adoption Support and Preservation program are available to all adopted children, including those adopted from other countries.

Minnesota's Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System and the Social Services Information System records information on children adopted from other countries who enter out-of-home placement. Because place of birth is not an Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System requirement, our system does not capture that information. The department is unable to determine which, if any, children in out-of-home placement at the county level were

adopted from another country. Ways to identify these children to obtain the requested information are being investigated.

The department maintains a separate database on all children under state guardianship making it possible to identify state wards from those children brought in from other countries.

L. ADOPTION INCENTIVE PAYMENTS

Adoption incentive funds are used for adoption assistance payments, recruitment activities and support for adoptive parents. Minnesota received \$82,000 in Federal Fiscal Year 2003.

M. STAFF TRAINING

This information is found in Section II, The Plan: Basic Elements, Part N.

N. EVALUATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This information is found in Section II, The Plan: Basic Elements, Part N.

**Attachment A: Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Five-Year
Plan, 2005-2009**

Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Minnesota Plan 2004-2009

Program Areas Selected for Improvement

The Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act Plan outlines the five-year strategy for improvement of Minnesota's child protection system.

The Minnesota Department of Human Services selected the following six areas that need improvement from the areas listed in the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, section 106(a)(1) through (14):

- (1) The intake, assessment, screening and investigation of reports of abuse and neglect
- (3) Case management, including ongoing case monitoring and delivery of services and treatment provided to children
- (6)(B) Developing, strengthening and facilitating training, including training regarding legal duties of such individuals
- (8) Developing and facilitating training protocols for individuals mandated to report child abuse and neglect
- (12) Developing and enhancing the capacity of community-based programs to integrate shared leadership strategies between parents and professionals to prevent and treat child abuse and neglect at the neighborhood level
- (14) Supporting and enhancing collaboration among public health agencies, the child protection system and private community-based programs to provide child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment services (including linkages with educational systems) and to address the health needs, including mental health needs, of children who are the subject of substantiated child maltreatment reports.

Description of Services and Training Activities

Some of the activities described in this state plan differ from the previous Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act plan. New activities incorporate the efforts to improve areas identified by the Child and Family Service Review. A greater emphasis is being placed on policies to improve child protection services, earlier and effective intervention, and to permit community based assessment/intervention to better serve families. This plan incorporates the changes made to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act in 2003.

- **Child Safety**

Improve compliance with state and local policies and protocols to assure consistent, timely and appropriate responses to reports of child maltreatment.

Strategies and Time Lines:

- Seek technical assistance from the National Resource Center on Child Maltreatment. Complete by June 2004
- Convene stakeholder advisory committee to clarify statutory timelines for face to face observation of the victim when responding to a report of child

maltreatment, and follow recommendations. If statute changes are required, amendments will be proposed in the January 2006 legislative session. Begin implementation in August 2006

- Convene a screening criteria stakeholder advisory committee and create statewide culturally informed child maltreatment screening criteria that are effectively, appropriately and consistently used by all county child protection agencies. Complete screening criteria by September 2005
- Develop standards and best practice guides that will improve decision-making and identify alternatives to foster care placement for safety intervention when responding to a maltreatment report, or whenever a safety issue is present. Complete by December 2007
- Develop a best practice guide for conducting relative searches to implement statutory requirement that includes:
 - initiating a relative search without delay
 - considering both maternal and paternal relatives
 - specifying that a relative who initially declines to be considered as a placement option be considered as an option at a later date. Complete by June 2005.

- **Assess Risk of Harm**

Assure that the assessment of families at risk of child maltreatment is fair and equitable across all racial, ethnic and cultural groups and identifies strengths as well as needs.

Strategies and Time Lines:

- Conduct a validation study of the Structured Decision-Making Family Risk Assessment tool, as it applies to various racial, ethnic and cultural groups. Complete by December 2004
- Modify or change the Structured Decision-Making assessment tool and/or protocol if changes are indicated by the study findings and develop an implementation plan. Complete by December 2005
- Develop a formalized system of assessing protective factors as part of the safety and risk assessment conducted in response to child maltreatment. Complete by July 2006
- Expand the use of Family Group Decision-Making beyond placement prevention, to include safety and service planning and the broader engagement of community supports. Complete by October 2004.

- **Prevention and Early Intervention**

Develop a child protection response continuum that is fair and equitable and increases community involvement in the prevention and early intervention of child maltreatment.

- **Strategies and Time Lines:**

- Obtain grant funding to pilot a program to connect families at risk of child maltreatment, who have been reported but not accepted by the child protection response system, with community based social service providers for assessment services. Initiate pilot project by January 2006

- Pilot a program to defer accepted reports of child maltreatment that do not allege substantial child endangerment, directly to community based social service programs for a safety assessment and services if needed. Obtain grant funding for pilot by July 2007
- Provide community social service providers access to the Child Welfare Training System on family assessment and training related to providing services to families. The training will be accessible by July 2004
- Develop a formalized system of assessing protective factors as part of the safety and risk assessment conducted in response to child maltreatment. Complete by December 2005
- Study and propose options/alternatives to placing children in foster care or emergency shelters when responding to child maltreatment reports where the child's safety is a concern. Complete by December 2006.

- **Services or Treatment**

Families and children receive appropriate and adequate services to meet their individual needs to reduce risk of harm.

Strategies and Time Lines:

- Develop statewide standards for social worker visits with parents and children for in-home and out-of-home placement cases. Complete by January 2006
- Develop best practice guidelines for case monitoring after reunification to ensure safety of the child and to support the family in retaining custody and improving family functioning. Complete by December 2006
- Develop best practice standards and guidelines for family directed or family centered case planning practices that are culturally relevant and promote family participation and involvement. Complete by June 2006
- Convene an advisory group to develop/revise cross-cultural competency training with a focus on African American, American Indian, Hispanic, Southeast Asian and immigrant communities. The advisory group recommendations will guide the curriculum development and delivery of training. Complete by December 2006
- Work across divisions of the Minnesota Department of Human Services to identify and implement best practice approaches to addressing the co-occurrence of child maltreatment, mental illness and parental substance abuse. Begin implementation by July 2006.

- **Community Involvement**

Increase community awareness of child protection.

Strategies and Time Lines:

- Develop three additional county-based Citizen Review Panels that examine state and local child protection policies, procedures and practices. Complete by September 2006
- Develop and deliver training for mandated and voluntary reporters, including the continuum of responses to reports of maltreatment. Information provided

to mandated and voluntary reporters should be consistent throughout the state. Complete by October 2005.

- **Training**

Ensure that professionals involved with child maltreatment cases receive investigations, interviewing child victims, understanding the client's fourth amendment rights and working as part of a multi-disciplinary team on prosecutions.

Strategies and Time Lines:

- Revise the Child Welfare Training System CORE training and legal issues course to include fourth amendment provisions and application to child protection assessments and case management. This strategy will be completed by August 1, 2004
- Revise the Child Welfare Training System CORE training for social workers and supervisors as well as other specialized and related training curricula to provide a framework for family directed, strength-based social work practice. Implement revised training by June 2006
- Contract with agencies to provide training on forensic child interviewing techniques to child protection staff, law enforcement officers and county or tribal attorneys who handle child maltreatment cases. Contracts continue until June 30, 2005; upon satisfactory performance contracts will be renewed until 2007
- Contract with the Minnesota County Attorneys Association to provide training to county attorneys on prosecuting civil and criminal child protection cases. This strategy will be accomplished by June 2005
- Provide regional training forums for local child protection agencies concerning child exposure to methamphetamine labs and the impact of methamphetamine use on parenting capacity. Begin implementation by September 2004
- Develop curriculum through the Child Welfare Training System that provides guidance for addressing the co-occurrence of child maltreatment and methamphetamine use. Begin implementation by April 2005.

- **Refer Children for Developmental Screening**

Identify children under age three who have developmental delays through screening of children at risk of developmental delays due to their environment.

Strategies and Time Lines:

- Develop and implement training for child protection workers, supervisors and early intervention developmental screening staff, on the requirement to refer children under the age of three involved in a substantiated maltreatment case for a developmental screening under Part C. Initiate training by August 2004
- Develop a method to document in case record that eligible children under the age of three were referred for developmental assessments in the Social Service Information System. This strategy will be accomplished by April 2005.

- Incorporate into the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System the requirement to refer children under the age of three who are involved in a child protection case where a determination was made that maltreatment occurred for a developmental assessment. Training will be developed by April 2005.
- **Quality Assurance**
Conduct regular reviews of the quality of child protection services provided to children and families.

Strategies and Time Lines

- Monitor the provision of child protection services through the Minnesota Child and Family Service Review to measure progress toward substantial conformity on the federal Child and Family Service Review outcome items. This strategy is an on-going and expected to continue through 2009
- Expand Citizen Review Panels to three additional counties. Citizen Review Panels play an integral role in ensuring that Minnesota is meeting its goal of protecting children from abuse and neglect and is meeting the permanency needs of children. Expansion to be complete by September 2006. Citizen Review Panels are ongoing
- Review child protection cases that involve a fatality or near fatality to learn how to improve policy or practice issues needing improvement. Recommendations for improving policy and practice will be made to state and local agencies following every case reviewed. This strategy is an ongoing and expected to continue through 2009.

Required Assurances

The assurances form has been completed and signed by Governor Tim Pawlenty and is included with this plan submission.

Notification Regarding Statute Changes

There have been no substantive changes in Minnesota statutes that would affect eligibility for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act.

**Attachment B: Chafee Foster Care Independence Program
Education and Training Vouchers Program Plans
FFY 2005-2009 STATE PLAN**

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PART I - NARRATIVE

A. Introduction

This is Minnesota's application for Independent Living Funds for Federal Fiscal Years 2005-2009 to address the requirements of Public Law (P.L.) 106-169, the Chafee Foster Care Independence Act of 1999. Public Law 106-169 amended Section 477 of the Social Security Act to provide states with funding to help youth make the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency.

B. Responsible State Agency

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Child Safety and Permanency Division, will administer, supervise and oversee the programs carried out under this plan and will cooperate in national evaluations of the effects of the programs implemented to achieve its purposes.

C. Program Description

DHS will disburse federal funds under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) in two ways:

- Allocations are available to all 87 Minnesota county social service agencies, and all 11 tribal social service agencies. Allocations are calculated based on formulas developed by the Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF) Advisory Committee and the Indian Child Welfare Advisory Committee. Counties and tribes submit annual plans for use of the allocation to DHS. Following approval of the plan, counties and tribes receive quarterly allocation checks.
- Additional funds are available to private agencies for development of independent living services to youth statewide. Grants are awarded through a Request for Proposals process. Private agencies agree to serve youth referred by county social workers and probation officers. These agencies also recruit and serve eligible youth ages 18 to 21.

Minnesota anticipates serving a minimum of 2,500 youth during each federal fiscal year. DHS places an emphasis on serving youth who are aging out of care, or who have left care and need supportive services to prevent homelessness. This emphasis is reflected in the fact that during FFY 2003 approximately 23 percent of youth served were ages 18 to 21. Youth of color were 33 percent of all CFCIP eligible youth in calendar year 2003. In FFY 2003, 39 percent of youth served were youth of color.

Eighty-five of Minnesota's 87 counties and three tribal social services agencies are currently funded and provide the following activities for youth:

- Assistance with budgeting, locating and maintaining housing, and access to health care
- Job training and placement programs
- Individualized independent living skills training provided by county social workers or family service aides
- Career counseling, planning, and vocational training
- Education and Training Vouchers for post-secondary education
- Assistance and advocacy for youth over age 18, who no longer have a county social worker and need help preparing for post-secondary education
- Connecting youth with a supportive adult they can turn to as a resource in the community when they no longer have a county social worker
- Preparation for the General Equivalency Diploma (GED) or other tests necessary for admission to institutions of higher education (i.e. ACT, SAT, or PSAT)
- Independent living skills training groups, including outdoor adventure education activities
- Groups to improve social skills and increase self-esteem
- Training and experience in decision-making and goal setting
- Independent living skills training at youth retreats, workshops, and conferences
- Parenting skill training and support.

Twelve private non-profit agencies are funded to serve youth referred by counties, and youth who are ages 18 to 21. The older youth have left out-of-home placement and are no longer receiving county social services. The grantee agencies provide youth with intensive group work and case management for six to 12 months. Both "hard" and "soft" independent living skills are taught. Experiential and outdoor adventure-based education is a part of each group, as well as mentors, community service projects, field trips, weekend retreats, and a summer youth leadership conference.

All DHS funded counties and private agencies identify and use other public and private programs and resources in order to maximize service to youth. A benefit to this approach is that it builds future connections and resources for youth in their communities. Examples of resources used include:

- Job opportunities through summer youth employment programs
- Drivers' education instruction through local schools
- Career assessment programs at local technical colleges
- Public and private financial aide sources for youth attending post-secondary school
- Personal safety, health care and nutrition education provided by public health staff, county extension services, and women's resource centers
- Training videos and curricula available through DHS staff
- Wilderness camping scholarships through YMCA camps, and other outdoor education organizations
- High ropes and other group initiatives offered and subsidized by YMCA's, state universities, and other organizations
- Group training events provided by volunteer community experts

- Tours and orientations for prospective students at post-secondary institutions
- College and university interns
- Meeting room space donated by churches, community centers, colleges, etc.
- Transportation for group training sessions and retreats provided by volunteer drivers
- Volunteer mentors, volunteer co-facilitators, and volunteer chaperones for retreats.

During 2001, at the recommendation of DHS, the Minnesota Legislature adopted amendments to the Minnesota Juvenile Court Act pertaining to out-of-home placement plans. Part of the amended language specifies that an independent living plan be completed for children age 16 and older who are in placement as a result of a permanency disposition. The plan must include, but not be limited to:

- Educational, vocational, or employment planning
- Health care planning and medical coverage
- Transportation including, where appropriate, assisting the child in obtaining a driver's license
- Money management
- Planning for housing
- Social and recreational skills
- Establishing and maintaining connections with the child's family and community.

D. Definition of Eligibility Criteria under CFCIP

Under the CFCIP, Minnesota has determined that youth as young as age 14 and up to age 21 will be served. Prior to the Chafee Act, county social service agencies were eager to lower the eligibility age from 16 to 14. There is a statewide consensus that youth age 18 to 21 should be served, and in Minnesota we have done so since 1987.

Minnesota defines eligibility criteria as:

- Youth ages 14 to 21, who currently are, or previously were, in out-of-home care after their 14th birthday; and
- Youth whose placement is or was approved by a county social service agency, juvenile or tribal court. This may include relative or kinship placements.

Indicators that an adolescent will remain in out-of-home care until age 18 include:

- A court order for long term foster care; or
- A court order for extended juvenile jurisdiction; or
- Transfer of legal custody to relatives or kin; or
- Youth is a ward of the state; or
- The professional opinion of the case worker based on a unique case history, presenting problems, and individual case goals.

E. Designing and Delivering Services to Youth Under Age 16

Until FFY 2000, Minnesota did not provide independent living services to youth under age 16. Consultation with counties, grantees, and other agencies on how to best serve younger teens continues, and curriculum options are being explored and implemented. Independent living skills taught to this age group will include:

- * Self esteem/image enhancement
- * Dealing with discrimination
- * Interpersonal relationships/peer pressure
- * Conflict resolution
- * Communication
- * Decision making
- * Problem solving
- * Goal setting/planning
- * Anger management
- * Budgeting, credit and consumer skills
- * Separation and loss
- * Time management
- * Nutrition, meal planning and cooking
- * Career exploration/career fairs/volunteer work
- * Parenting skills
- * Reproductive health

It is also anticipated that foster parent training will result in appropriate skills training for younger teens in out-of-home placement.

F. Education and Training Vouchers

In May of 2003, at the recommendation of the SELF Advisory Committee, a work group was recruited to review options for use of CFCIP funded Education and Training Vouchers. State staff researched financial aid options available to low-income youth through federal and state sources, consulted with the Orphan Foundation, and consulted with the Page Foundation which gives scholarships to Minnesota youth of color who attend college. Work group members included urban and rural county social workers, non-profit agency youth workers, an adoption agency representative, a tribal social service youth worker, an attorney from the Minnesota Children's Law Center, and a financial aid expert from the Minnesota Higher Education Services Office.

A draft of the workgroup's model and recommendations was widely distributed via e-mail for feedback and was presented to the SELF Advisory Committee. By the end of FFY 2003 a process was in place enabling CFCIP eligible youth to apply for Education and Training Vouchers (ETVs). Information about ETVs and the application form were added to the Minnesota Department of Human Services Adolescent Services web site. A bulletin announcing the funding was disseminated to counties in September of 2003. Five-thousand brochures were printed and mailed to non-profit agencies, high schools, charter schools, alternative schools, colleges, universities, vocational

schools, MFIP case managers, Workforce Centers, the Foster Parent Association and county social service agencies. Many counties have requested additional brochures to give to foster parents.

The first deadline for ETV applications was October 1, 2003. Twenty-seven applications were submitted. Twenty-five youth were awarded ETVs. Eighty youth submitted applications for ETVs on May 1, 2004.

G. Expanding and Strengthening Services to Youth Age 18 to 21

Counties are encouraged to set a priority on service to youth who are within a year of aging out of the system. Education and Training Vouchers will help focus attention on planning for youth as they near the end of their stay in long-term foster care. Every youth awarded an ETV is assigned an adult mentor. Counties are encouraged to use the option, provided by the CFCIP, of room and board to extend foster care placements for youth who are simply not ready to exit care at age 18 or completion of high school.

Currently about one-third of youth served by grantee agencies are ages 18 to 21. This age group will remain a priority for grantee agencies, since they can rarely access county child welfare services after age 18.

H. Definition of Room and Board

DHS, for the purposes of CFCIP funding, defines room and board to include rent, damage deposits, utilities, and telephone installation. Each youth's residence must be approved by the agency serving the youth before CFCIP funds may be used for a deposit, rent or utilities.

Counties and grantees have the following options. They may:

- Make case by case decisions about type, amount, and duration of room and board assistance each youth needs; or
- Require youth receiving room and board assistance to participate in or graduate from an independent living skills training program; or
- Determine on a case by case basis the level of supervision and case management needed for youth receiving room and board assistance.

During federal fiscal year 2003 Minnesota used only 5 percent of its CFCIP funding for room and board. Use of CFCIP funds for room and board is not expected to increase as state and/or federally funded transitional housing programs were the primary affordable housing option for youth, and state budget cuts in 2003 caused the demise of many programs.

I. Efforts to Expand Medicaid Coverage to Youth Aging Out of Care

Minnesota is facing severe budget cuts in the next biennium and perhaps longer. An attempt to expand Medicaid coverage would have no chance of success during this time. Our best strategy is to support the maintenance of MinnesotaCare, which is a subsidized health care program created in

1992 by the Minnesota Legislature. It is a medical insurance alternative for low-income people who do not have employer-subsidized or private health insurance. It is funded by enrollee premiums, and a statewide tax on health care services. MinnesotaCare also receives federal funding. MinnesotaCare coverage is comparable to Medicaid coverage, and is a good option for youth age 18 to 21 who have aged out of care.

J. Training Activities Under CFCIP

During FFY 2003 DHS training funded by the CFCIP included one statewide conference and one workshop for county social workers, private agency youth workers, probation officers, group home and residential treatment staff.

Additionally, an annual three day leadership conference is held for Minnesota youth who are CFCIP eligible. It is attended by about 200 youth and 75 youth workers.

DHS staff also offer counties and private agencies technical assistance and consultation to deliver the most beneficial, cost-effective services to youth. Guidance and direction is provided for the identification of eligible youth, individual assessment of youth, development of comprehensive county service plans, and interpretation of service standards and guidelines for program activities. A resource library of independent living skills curriculums, videos and other resources is made available for use by county and grantee agency workers.

During FFY 2005-2009 technical assistance, consultation, two annual statewide conferences and one to two annual workshops will continue to be offered.

During FFY 2003 a 15 hour foster parent curriculum was completed entitled "A Guide to Helping Youth In Care Transition to Healthy Adulthood". It was offered in three counties, one urban and two out-state. This training is now a component of the Minnesota Department of Human Services Child Welfare Training System and is available at no cost to all Minnesota foster parents licensed by county social service agencies, as county funds contribute to the training system on an ongoing basis. If group home or residential treatment staff wish to register for the training scheduled for counties, they are welcome to do so. Counties may charge them \$50 per person, but until now, have allowed them to attend at no cost. A presentation was made in March of 2004 to the Minnesota Association of Child Care Agencies in order to increase their awareness of this training opportunity.

During FFY 2004 the curriculum will be offered in three locations. Between FFY 2005 and 2009 the curriculum will be offered in 15 locations and a minimum of 300 individuals will be trained.

K. Minnesota's Adolescent Services Initiative

The Adolescent Services Initiative is a comprehensive package of services available to adolescents in Minnesota's social service system. It is a new approach involving numerous department services geared towards serving adolescents. Our vision is to prepare adolescents particularly those in the child welfare system to make a successful transition to adulthood and to become productive members of society. To accomplish this, we will work with our partners in education, corrections,

employment, housing and mental health fields to focus on four sets of tools for older adolescents: 1) resources; 2) permanency; 3) coordination, and 4) children's mental health.

As this work moves forward we anticipate providing opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback on recommendations for improving coordination within state government specific to youth in transition. Additionally, we plan to solicit input from youth serving organizations on a web site designed to provide resources to older adolescents and youth advocates involved in transition planning.

L. Consultation and Coordination with Stakeholders

A draft of this document was e-mailed to the following stakeholders for review and comment:

- County social service agencies, specifically the person responsible for CFCIP funds and programming
- Non-profit agencies receiving CFCIP grant funds from the Minnesota Department of Human Services to serve eligible youth
- A broader group of Minnesota non-profit agencies serving youth, including homeless and runaway youth
- Youth members of the Tomorrow's Leaders Today Youth Leadership planning committee
- Minnesota's CFCIP Advisory Committee members
- Members of the Education and Training Voucher workgroup
- Interagency Committee on Adolescent Transition.

A draft of this plan was presented orally and handed out in paper form to the following groups:

- Indian Child Welfare Advisory Council – 4/2/04
- Chisago County Citizen Review Panel – 4/6-04
- Ramsey County Citizen Review Panel – 4/7/04
- Hennepin and Ramsey County (urban) former and current foster care youth – 4/12/04
- Winona County Citizen Review Panel – 4/14/04
- Metro County Supervisor's meeting – 4/16/04
- Washington County Citizen Review Panel – 4/20/04
- Ombudsperson for Families – 5/3/04
- Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota Parent Leadership Team Meeting – 5/1/04.

Persons reviewing drafts of the plan had many questions, however no substantive changes were recommended.

M. Ensuring Fair and Equitable Treatment of Youth Receiving Benefits

Minnesota ensures fair and equitable treatment of youth receiving benefits in the following ways:

- Clear policies are in place regarding eligibility criteria, the range of services that are recommended and can be funded, and how services can be offered. Regular DHS bulletins,

- training, and technical assistance by telephone, e-mail, and site visit continuously educate and clarify policies for counties, grantees, foster parents, parents, and youth
- Policies incorporate the requirements of the Multi-Ethnic Placement Act of 1994, the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, and the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997. Training for county social workers clarifies that independent living services are desirable for every youth, including youth with permanency goals of reunification or adoption
 - A young person's eligibility for services under the CFCIP is not determined by placement or geography. A youth can receive services in any county, or from a statewide network of non-profit agencies. A young person does not lose eligibility if their county social services case is closed, or if they move to a different area of the state
 - Plans are in place to serve youth at various ages and stages of achieving independence, at any time between ages 14 and 21. Youth may continue receiving services up to age 21 after leaving out-of-home placement, even if they return home or are adopted
 - Services are made available to Minnesota's Indian youth on the same basis as non-Indian youth by offering CFCIP funds to all tribal social service agencies
 - Careful efforts are made to fund non-profit agencies statewide to do outreach and serve youth ages 18 to 21 who are disconnected from the child welfare system
 - Careful efforts are made to fund non-profit agencies to specifically serve youth of color (African American, Hispanic, Asian) in areas of the state where those youth are concentrated
 - Demographic data on youth served is closely analyzed to determine Minnesota's effectiveness in equitably serving youth of different ages, genders, races, and locations in the state.

PART II - FFY 2004 FUNDS REQUESTED

CFCIP Funds Requested: \$2,062,856

State Match Amount: \$515,714

Sources of the State Match:

- County funds
- Local churches, donations and financial aid
- Volunteers' time as mentors and trainers

Amount of Federal Funds to be Used for Room and Board: Maximum of \$618,857

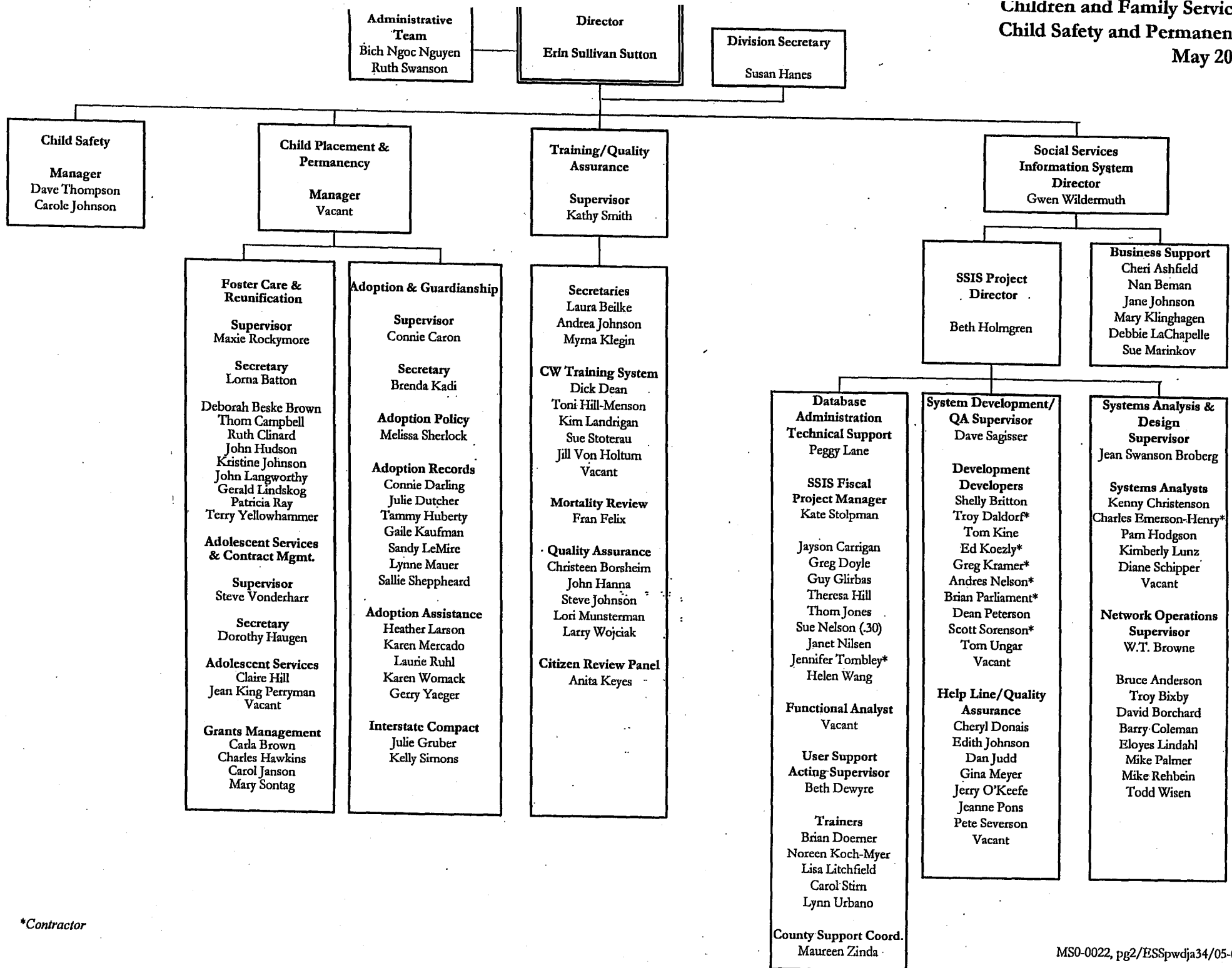
Education and Training Voucher Funds Requested: \$673,186

State Match Amount: \$168,297

Sources of the State Match:

- Tuition Waivers for State Wards
- State Grants for low-income students
- Privately funded scholarships awarded to students
- Volunteer mentors assigned to students

Attachment C: Child Safety and Permanency Division Organizational Chart



*Contractor

Attachment D: Assurances

Attachment E

Title IV-B Child and Family Services Plan: Assurances

The assurances listed below are in 45 CFR 1357.15(c) and title IV-B sections 422(b)(10), 422(b)(12), section 422 (b) (14), section 432(a)(4), 432 (a)(7) and 432(a)(9). These assurances will remain in effect during the period of the current five-year CFSP.

1. The State assures that it will participate in any evaluations the Secretary of HHS may require.
2. The State assures that it will administer the CFSP in accordance with methods determined by the Secretary to be proper and efficient.
3. The State assures that it has a plan for the training and use of paid paraprofessional staff, with particular emphasis on the full-time or part-time employment of low-income persons, as community service aides; and a plan for the use of non-paid or partially paid volunteers in providing services and in assisting any advisory committees established by the State.
4. The State assures that standards and requirements imposed with respect to child care under title XX shall apply with respect to day care services, if provided under the CFSP, except insofar as eligibility for such services is involved.
5. the State assures that it is operating, to the satisfaction of the Secretary:
 - a statewide information system from which can be readily determined the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or, within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care;
 - a case review system (as defined in section 475(5) for each child receiving foster care under the supervision of the State;
 - a service program designed to help children—where safe and appropriate, return to families from which they have been removed; or be placed for adoption; with a legal guardian, or, if adoption or legal guardianship is determined not to be appropriate for a child, in some other planned, permanent living arrangement; and
 - a preplacement preventive services program designed to help children at risk of foster care placement remain safely with their families; and
 - The State assures that it has implemented policies and administrative and judicial procedures for children abandoned at or shortly after birth that are necessary to enable permanent decisions to be made expeditiously with respect to the placement of such children.
6. The State assures that plans will be developed for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.

Attachment E

7. The State assures that it will collect and report information on children who are adopted from other countries and who enter State custody as a result of the disruption of an adoptive placement, or the dissolution of an adoption. Such information will include the reasons for disruption or dissolution, the agencies who handled the placement or adoption, the plans for the child, and the number of children to whom this pertains.
8. The State assures that no more than 10 percent of expenditures under the plan for any fiscal year with respect to which the State is eligible for payment under section 434 of the Act for the fiscal year shall be for administrative costs and that the remaining expenditures shall be for programs of family preservation services, community-based family support services, time-limited reunification services and adoption promotion and support services, with significant portions of such expenditures for each such program.
9. The State assures that Federal funds provided to the State for title IV-B, Subpart 2 programs will not be used to supplant Federal or non-Federal funds for existing services and activities.
10. The State assures that, in administering and conducting service programs under this plan, the safety of the children to be served shall be of paramount concern.

Effective Date and State Officials Signature

I hereby certify that the State complies with the requirements of the above assurances.

Certified by: W. W. Gorney

Title: Assistant Commissioner

Agency: NW Department of Human Services

Dated: 6/15/04

Reviewed by: _____

(ACF Regional Representative)

Dated: _____

Attachment E

State Chief Executive Officer's Assurance Statement for The Child Abuse and Neglect State Plan

As Chief Executive Officer of the State of

Minnesota, I certify that the State has in effect and is enforcing a State law, or has in effect and is operating a Statewide program, relating to child abuse and neglect which includes:

- 1) provisions or procedures for reporting known or suspected instances of child abuse and neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(i));
- 2) policies and procedures (including appropriate referrals to child protection service systems and for other appropriate services) to address the needs of infants born and identified as affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms resulting from prenatal drug exposure, including a requirement that health care providers involved in the delivery or care of such infants notify the child protective services system of the occurrence of such condition in such infants (section 106(b)(2)(A)(ii));
- 3) the development of a plan of safe care for the infant born and identified as being affected by illegal substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms (section 106(b)(2)(A)(iii));
- 4) procedures for the immediate screening, risk and safety assessment, and prompt investigation of such reports (section 106(b)(2)(A)(iv));
- 5) triage procedures for the appropriate referral of a child not at risk of imminent harm to a community organization or voluntary preventive service (section 106(b)(2)(A)(v));
- 6) procedures for immediate steps to be taken to ensure and protect the safety of the abused or neglected child, and of any other child under the same care who may also be in danger of abuse or neglect; and ensuring their placement in a safe environment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(vi));
- 7) provisions for immunity from prosecution under State and local laws and regulations for individuals making good faith reports of suspected or known instances of child abuse or neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(vii));
- 8) methods to preserve the confidentiality of all records in order to protect the rights of the child and of the child's parents or guardians, including requirements ensuring that reports and records made and maintained pursuant to the purposes of CAPTA shall only be made available to--
 - a) individuals who are the subject of the report;
 - b) Federal, State, or local government entities, or any agent of such entities, as described in number 9 below;

Attachment E

- c) child abuse citizen review panels;
 - d) child fatality review panels;
 - e) a grand jury or court, upon a finding that information in the record is necessary for the determination of an issue before the court or grand jury; and
 - f) other entities or classes of individuals statutorily authorized by the State to receive such information pursuant to a legitimate State purpose (section 106(b)(2)(A)(viii));
- 9) provisions to require a State to disclose confidential information to any Federal, State, or local government entity, or any agent of such entity, that has a need for such information in order to carry out its responsibility under law to protect children from abuse and neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(ix));
- 10) provisions which allow for public disclosure of the findings or information about the case of child abuse or neglect which has resulted in a child fatality or near fatality (section 106(b)(2)(A)(x));
- 11) the cooperation of State law enforcement officials, court of competent jurisdiction, and appropriate State agencies providing human services in the investigation, assessment, prosecution, and treatment of child abuse or neglect (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xi));
- 12) provisions requiring, and procedures in place that facilitate the prompt expungement of any records that are accessible to the general public or are used for purposes of employment or other background checks in cases determined to be unsubstantiated or false, except that nothing in this section shall prevent State child protective services agencies from keeping information on unsubstantiated reports in their casework files to assist in future risk and safety assessment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xii));
- 13) provisions and procedures requiring that in every case involving an abused or neglected child which results in a judicial proceeding, a guardian ad litem, who has received training appropriate to the role, and who may be an attorney or a court appointed special advocate who has received training appropriate to that role (or both), shall be appointed to represent the child in such proceedings—
- (a) to obtain firsthand, a clear understanding of the situation and needs of the child; and
 - (b) to make recommendations to the court concerning the best interests of the child (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xiii));
- 14) the establishment of citizen review panels in accordance with subsection 106(c) (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xiv));
- 15) provisions, procedures, and mechanisms —
- (a) for the expedited termination of parental rights in the case of any infant determined to be abandoned under State law; and

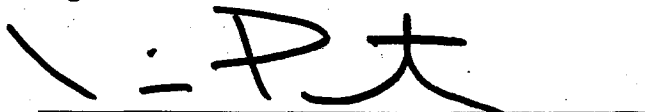
Attachment E

- (b) by which individuals who disagree with an official finding of abuse or neglect can appeal such finding (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xv));
- 16) provisions, procedures, and mechanisms that assure that the State does not require reunification of a surviving child with a parent who has been found by a court of competent jurisdiction--
- a) to have committed a murder (which would have been an offense under section 1111(a) of title 18, United States Code, if the offense had occurred in the special maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the United States) of another child or such parent;
 - b) to have committed voluntary manslaughter (which would have been an offense under section 1112(a) of title 18, United States Code, if the offense had occurred in the special maritime or territorial jurisdiction of the United States) of another child or such parent;
 - c) to have aided or abetted, attempted, conspired, or solicited to commit such murder or voluntary manslaughter; or
 - d) to have committed a felony assault that results in the serious bodily injury to the surviving child or another child of such parent (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xvi));
- 17) provisions that assure that, upon the implementation by the State of the provisions, procedures, and mechanisms under number 16 above, conviction of any one of the felonies listed in number 16 above constitute grounds under State law for the termination of parental rights of the convicted parent as to the surviving children (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xvii));
- 18) provisions and procedures to require that a representative of the child protective services agency shall, at the initial time of contact with the individual subject to a child abuse and neglect investigation, advise the individual of the complaints or allegations made against the individual, in a manner that is consistent with laws protecting the rights of the reporter (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xviii));
- 19) provisions addressing the training of representatives of the child protective services system regarding the legal duties of the representatives, which may consist of various methods of informing such representatives of such duties, in order to protect the legal rights and safety of children and families from the initial time of contact during investigation through treatment (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xix));
- 20) provisions and procedures for improving the training, retention and supervision of caseworkers (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xx));
- 21) provisions and procedures for referral of a child under the age of 3 who is involved in a substantiated case of child abuse or neglect to early intervention services funded under part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxi));

Attachment E

- 22) not later than June 25, 2005 (2 years after the enactment of Public Law 108-36), provisions and procedures for requiring criminal background checks for prospective foster and adoptive parents and other adult relatives and non-relatives residing in the household (section 106(b)(2)(A)(xxii));
- 23) procedures for responding to the reporting of medical neglect (including instances of withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions), procedures or programs, or both (within the State child protective services system), to provide for--
- a) coordination and consultation with individuals designated by and within appropriate health care facilities;
 - b) prompt notification by individuals designated by and within appropriate health-care facilities of cases of suspected medical neglect (including instances of withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions); and
 - c) authority, under State law, for the State child protective services system to pursue any legal remedies, including the authority to initiate legal proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction, as may be necessary to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatment from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions (section 106(b)(2)(B)); and
- 24) authority under State law to permit the child protective services system of the State to pursue any legal remedies, including the authority to initiate legal proceedings in a court of competent jurisdiction, to provide medical care or treatment for a child when such care or treatment is necessary to prevent or remedy serious harm to the child, or to prevent the withholding of medically indicated treatments from disabled infants with life-threatening conditions (section 113).

Signature of Chief Executive Officer:



Date: 6/18/04

Reviewed by: _____

(ACF Regional Representative)

Dated: _____

**STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CERTIFICATIONS
FOR THE CHAFEE FOSTER CARE INDEPENDENCE PROGRAM**

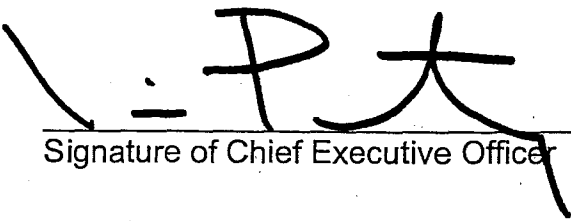
As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Minnesota, I certify that the State has in effect and is operating a Statewide program relating to Foster Care Independent Living and that the following provisions to effectively implement the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program are in place:

1. The State will provide assistance and services to youth who have left foster care because they have attained 18 years of age, and have not attained 21 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(A)];
2. Not more than 30 percent of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment for a fiscal year will be expended for room and board for youth who have left foster care because they have attained 18 years of age, and have not attained 21 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(B)];
3. None of the amounts paid to the State from its allotment will be expended for room or board for any child who has not attained 18 years of age [Section 477(b)(3)(C)];
4. The State will use training funds provided under the program of Federal payments for foster care and adoption assistance to provide training to help foster parents, adoptive parents, workers in group homes, and case managers understand and address the issues confronting adolescents preparing for independent living, and will, to the extent possible, coordinate such training with the independent living program conducted for adolescents [Section 477(b)(3)(D)];
5. The State will adequately prepare prospective foster parents with the appropriate knowledge and skills to provide for the needs of the child before a child, under the supervision of the State, is placed with prospective foster parents and that such preparation will be continued, as necessary, after the placement of the child. [Section 471(a), as amended];
6. The State has consulted widely with public and private organizations in developing the plan and has given all interested members of the public at least 30 days to submit comments on the plan [Section 477(b)(3)(E)];
7. The State will make every effort to coordinate the State programs receiving funds provided from an allotment made to the State under subsection (c) with other Federal and State programs for youth (especially transitional living youth projects funded under part B of title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974); abstinence education programs, local housing programs, programs for

STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CERTIFICATIONS—Continued

disabled youth (especially sheltered workshops), and school-to-work programs offered by high schools or local workforce agencies [Section 477(b)(3)(F)];

8. Each Indian tribe in the State has been consulted about the programs to be carried out under the plan; there have been efforts to coordinate the programs with such tribes; and benefits and services under the programs will be made available to Indian youth in the State on the same basis as to other youth in the State [Section 477(b)(3)(G)];
9. Adolescents participating in the program under this section will participate directly in designing their own program activities that prepare them for independent living and the adolescents will be required to accept personal responsibility for living up to their part of the program [Section 477(b)(3)(H)]; and
10. The State has established and will enforce standards and procedures to prevent fraud and abuse in the programs carried out under the plan [Section 477(b)(3)(I)].



Signature of Chief Executive Officer


6/18/04

Date

**STATE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S CERTIFICATION
for the
EDUCATION AND TRAINING VOUCHER PROGRAM
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program**

As Chief Executive Officer of the State of Minnesota, I certify that the State has in effect and is operating a Statewide program relating to Foster Care Independent Living and that the following provisions will be implemented as of September 30, 2003:

1. The State will comply with the conditions specified in subsection 477(i).
2. The State has described methods it will use to:
 - ensure that the total amount of educational assistance to a youth under this and any other Federal assistance program does not exceed the total cost of attendance; and
 - avoid duplication of benefits under this and any other Federal assistance program; as defined in section 477(3)(b)(J).



Signature of Chief Executive Officer

Date 6/18/04

Attachment E: CFS-101, Parts I and II

CFS-101, Part I: Annual Budget Request for Title IV-B Supart 1 & 2 Funds, CAPTA and Chafee Foster Care Independence Program Fiscal Y 2004, October 1, 2004_ through September 30,2005_

1. State or ITO Minnesota	2. EIN: 41-6007162
3. Address: Department of Human Services 444 Lafayette Road N Saint Paul, MN 55155-3832	4. Submissions: [XX] New [] Revisions
5. Estimated title IV-B, Subpart 1 Funds (25% State match required)	\$ 6,783,947
6. Total Estimated title IV-B, Subpart 2 Funds (This amount should equal the sums of lines a-f.) (25% State match required)	\$ 5,689,373 *
a) Total Family Preservation Services.	\$ 1,137,875
b) Total Family Support Services.	\$ 1,137,875
c) Total Time Limited Family Reunification Services.	\$ 1,137,875
d) Total Adoption Promotion and Support Services.	\$ 1,137,875
e) Total for Other Service Related Activities (e.g. planning).	\$ 568,937
f) Total Administration (not to exceed 10% of estimated allotment).	\$ 568,937
7. Re-allotment of Title IV-B, Subpart 2 Funds for State and Indian Tribal Organizations (25% State match required)	
a) Indicate the amount of State's/Tribe's allotment that will not be required to carry out the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program. <u>\$0</u>	
b) If additional funds become available to States and ITOs, specify the amount of additional funds the State or Tribe is requesting. <u>\$400,000</u> (State Match 25% \$133,333)	
8. Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) Basic State Grant Only (no State match required)	
Estimated BSG Amount\$ 394,810 , plus additional allocation, as available.	
9. Estimated Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) funds (20% State match required \$ 515,716.00	\$2,062,865
10. Re-allotment fo CFCIP Funds (20% State match required)	
a) Indicate the amount of the State's allotment that will not be required to carry out (<u>0</u>	
b) If additional funds become available to States, specify the amount of additional funds the state is requesting <u>\$ 600,000</u> (State match 20% \$150,000)	
11. Certification by State Agency and/or Indian Tribal Organization	
The State agency or Indian Tribe submits the above estimate and request of funds under title IV-B,subpart 1 and/or 2, of the Social Security Act, for States only CAPTA BSG and theCFCIP, and agrees that the expenditures will be made in accordance with the Child and Family Services Plan, which has been jointly developed with the ACF Regional Office for the Fiscal Year ending September 30.	
Signature and Title of State/Tribal Agency Official <i>E. Sue Smith-Duiz</i>	Signature and Title of Regional Office Official
Date <u>6/23/04</u>	Date

* Including 25% state match of \$1,301,033

STATE or IT Minnesota

For FY OCTOBER 1, 2004 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2005

SERVICES/ACTIVITIES											(k) Number to be served [] Families [] Individuals	(l) POP. TO BE SERVED	(m) GEOG. AREA TO BE SERVED
	TITLE IV-B		(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)			
	(a) I-CWS	(b) II-PSSF	CAPTA*	CFCIP*	TITLE IV-E	TITLE XX (SSBG)	TITLE IV-A (TANF)	TITLE XIX CW-TCM	OTHER FED PROG.	STATE LOCAL DONATED FUNDS			
1) PREVENTION & SUPPORT SERVICES (Family Support)		1,422	154			1,856		4,201	47,851	26,473	11,910	Reports of Abuse/Neglect	Statewide/ Reservation
2) PROTECTIVE SERVICES			154			856		6,011	1,889	13,882	42,570		
3) CRISIS INTERVENTION (FAMILY PRESERVATION) (see note 1)	1,000	1,422				5,465		32,984	21,266	105,204	109,062		
(A) PREPLACEMENT PREVENTION												All Children in Foster Care	Statewide/ Reservation
(B) REUNIFICATION SERVICES								5,188	1,124	13,625	11,865		
4) TIME-LIMITED FAMILY REUNIFICATION		1,138						493	91	1,216	919		
5) ADOPTION PROMOTION AND SUPPORT SERVICES		1,138								15,873	15,873	All eligible Children	Statewide/ Reservation
6) FOSTER CARE MAINTENANCE: (A) FOSTER FAMILY & RELATIVE FOSTER CARE					13,500				14,920	78,928	15,821		
(B) GROUP/INST CARE					5,400				11,991	55,935	8,005		Statewide/ Reservation
7) ADOPTION SUBSIDY PMTS. (see note 2)					13,500					29,500	1,556		
8) INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES				2,063						886			
9) ADMIN & MGMT	5,784	284			51,000					116,213			
10) STAFF TRAINING		284	78	0	8,300					9,842			
11) FOSTER PARENT RECRUITMENT & TRAINING					375				15	398	444		
12) ADOPTIVE PARENT RECRUITMENT TRAINING										5,682			
13) CHILD CARE RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT/TRAINING					630				39,107	398	22,452		
14) TOTAL	6,784	5,689	386	2,063	92,705	8,177	0	48,876	138,254	474,499			

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

Other Federal Programs:

Respite Care; Crisis Nursery; Part H Education; JOBS

Notes:

1. Minnesota does not routinely collect separate family preservation service data by preplacement or reunification status, so lines 3(a) and 3(b) are shown only for row 3.
2. Adoption Assistance & Relative Custody Assistance