

**Strategic Plan
2015-2017**

Jennifer Strus, Assistant Secretary



Children's Administration

October 2016

DSHS MISSION

To transform lives

DSHS VISION

- People are healthy
- People are safe
- People are supported
- Taxpayer resources are guarded

DSHS VALUES

- Honesty and Integrity
- Pursuit of Excellence
- Open Communication
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Commitment to Service

CA MISSION

To transform lives by acting to protect children and promote healthier families through strong partnerships with the community, providers, and Tribes.

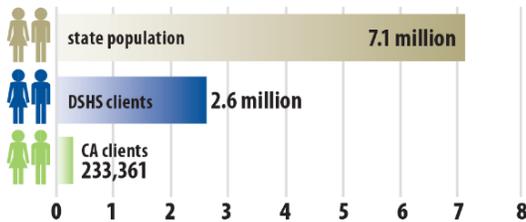
CA VISION

An end to Child Abuse and Neglect

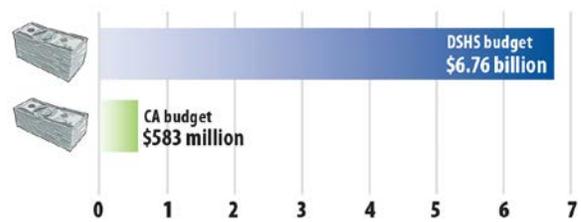
CA VALUES

- Collaboration
- Compassion
- Respect

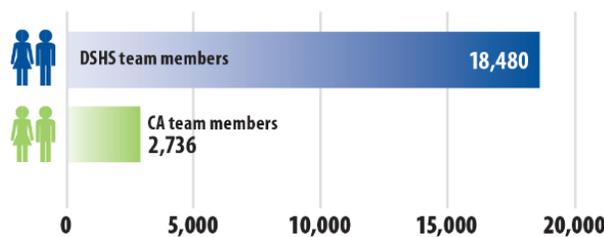
CLIENTS SERVED (between July 2014 - June 2015)



BUDGET (July 2015 - June 2016)



NUMBER OF TEAM MEMBERS (as of June 30, 2016)



Due to a data lag, the number of clients served graphic is for FY15, whereas the budget and number of team members graphics represent FY16. Also, the number of team members is an approximate count and includes part-time staff.

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STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
1115 Washington Street SE, Olympia, Washington 98504-5010



SECRETARY LETTER
October 2016

Dear Teammates:

Children's Administration continues to achieve remarkable results in all aspects of its programs to protect children in the state's care and to support their families and out-of-home caregivers.

Huge strides have been made in ensuring quality care for foster children; in timely responses to allegations of child abuse or neglect; and in finding new ways to identify and build on family strengths.

This strategic plan charts a course for the future that builds on these strengths, and Children's Administration has the professional, caring staff to make these improvements. The work they do each day to transform lives, although often unseen, is inspiring.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia K. Lashway".

Patricia K. Lashway
Acting Secretary

DSHS: Transforming Lives





STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION
PO Box 45040, Olympia, Washington 98504-5710



ASSISTANT SECRETARY LETTER
October 2016

Dear Teammates:

I am pleased to share with you our most recent Children's Administration Strategic Plan. I believe this plan incorporates the most important objectives by which we should measure ourselves as the state's child welfare system. It also clearly demonstrates the progress we have made in the last several years, none of which would have been possible without the hard work of the staff of the Children's Administration along with the support of our partners.

The progress we have made also demonstrates the commitment that each teammate has in making sure the three tenets of the child welfare system are met: safety, permanency and well-being. As we continue to improve our performance in future years, the beneficiaries of our good work remain the children and families of Washington state.

Thank you for your continued good work.

Sincerely,

Jennifer A. Strus, Assistant Secretary
Children's Administration



Introduction

The Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration (CA) is the public child welfare agency for the state of Washington. Our 2,736 staff members in 45 field offices work with children, families and the community to identify their needs and develop a plan for services that support families and ensure the safety and well-being of children. These services are designed to reduce the risk of abuse, to find safe alternatives to out-of-home placement and to ensure safety and permanency for children in out- of-home care.

CA's core services focus on:

- **Child Protective Services (CPS)** - Persons who suspect that a child is being abused or neglected contact CPS (1-866-END-HARM) with their concerns. During State Fiscal Year 2016, 39,680 referrals required a 24-hour or 72-hour face-to-face visit with the child through either a CPS investigation or CPS Family Assessment Response.
 - **Investigations** - In most cases referred for a CPS investigation, a social worker is required to conduct an initial face-to-face meeting with the alleged child victim within 24 (for emergent cases) or 72 hours of receiving the intake.
 - **Family Assessment Response (FAR)** - In January 2014, social workers began providing a differential response to low and moderate allegations of child abuse or neglect. Family Assessment Response is voluntary for families who qualify. In FAR, there is no investigation and no finding as to whether the alleged abuse or neglect occurred. Social workers work with the family, building on their strengths, to establish the community supports the family needs to be successful in the long-term. As of September 2016, FAR has been implemented in 37 offices. Assuming adequate state funding, CA is anxious to implement FAR statewide by the end of 2016.

People We Serve

Individuals Served in FY 2016

- Children in out-of-home care: 9,112
- Foster Homes: 3,287 (does not include homes certified by a private agency)
- Foster Homes newly licensed: 834

What CA Staff Do

2,736 team members in FY 2016:

- Received more than 111,311 calls requesting services
- Assessed 98,184 reports of suspected child abuse or neglect
- Responded in person to more than 39,680 of those reports
- Conducted an average of 9,590 monthly health and safety visits for children in out-of-home placement or on trial return home
- Established permanency for children by safely returning more than 3,946 from out-of- home care to their families and by finalizing more than 1,427 adoptions
- Recruited and licensed foster homes

- **Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS)** - Whether a dependency petition has been filed or the family has agreed to services or placement of their child through Family Voluntary Services, our CFWS social workers work with the families and children to reunify them or, if it would not be safe to reunite the child with his or her family, to find other permanent options for the children. As of September 2016, 9,112 children were in out-of-home care. Of that group of children, 45.2 percent were in the care of relatives and kin rather than foster homes.
- **Division of Licensed Resources (DLR)** - The staff in DLR license foster homes, complete home studies for child placements with relatives and investigate alleged violations of licensing standards and allegations of abuse or neglect by licensed providers. As of September 2016, there were 3,287 licensed foster homes (does not include homes certified by a private agency). DLR staff also conducts home studies for those seeking to adopt.

Child safety is at the forefront of every aspect of our work as we endeavor to achieve the following:

- Maintain children in their own homes and prevent out-of-home placement.
- Serve and support children during the time they are in out-of-home care.
- Return children home safely as quickly as possible.
- Support children in homes of fit and willing relatives.
- Secure permanent families for children who cannot safely return home.
- Decrease the over-representation of children of color in the child welfare system.



Through our partnerships with communities, community-based services and Tribes, CA works with parents to safely parent their children and achieve stable families.

Through the Fostering Well-Being Program, CA provides health coordination for children in out-of-home care. In addition, CA uses early and periodic screening, diagnosis and treatment for children involved in the public child welfare system and has a process for ensuring medically fragile children in our care are connected to ongoing and appropriate health care.

CA works diligently to provide exemplary services to vulnerable children and families, to constantly assess our performance outcomes and to practice good stewardship of state resources. While our first commitment is to the vulnerable children of Washington and their families, our guiding principles of collaboration, compassion and respect increase public trust and are reflected in our day-to-day actions.



Goals

Stated as a mission, the goal of the Children's Administration (CA) is **to transform lives by acting to protect children and promote healthier families through strong partnerships with the community, providers and Tribes.** To meet our commitment, CA's strategic plan has specific strategic objectives and performance metrics. The plan, objectives and metrics continue to evolve. Fully realized, this creates our vision: an end to child abuse and neglect. To track our progress toward this mission and this vision, we set performance goals in specific areas.

Washington's Commitment

We start with a customer focus in measuring our progress toward fulfilling our mission and reaching our vision. We ask, stated in its simplest terms, what our customers need from us to fulfill the vision. For CA, to best advance our mission, Washington state needs to be the national leader in keeping children safe, strengthening families and supporting children in out-of-home placement. We track our progress through a scorecard:

WASHINGTON'S COMMITMENT SCORECARD

Be the national leader in: **Keeping children safe, strengthening families and supporting children in out-of-home placement.**

| 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|--------|--------|-------------|-------------|
| YELLOW | YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW |

Children's Administration

YARDSTICK

The Yardstick (also referred to as the Scorecard) depicts the commitment and success of our state as a whole to transforming lives. DSHS considers other factors (e.g., caseloads, budget deficits, others' performance, etc.) when assigning the color codes.

Measuring up Washington

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | |
|---|---------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| Keep children safe | RED | ↑ YELLOW | YELLOW | GREEN | Timeliness of initial face-to-face interviews with possible victims continues to be exceptional. Focused work has reduced open cases. Retention and hiring are serious concerns. |
| Strengthen families | YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | Differential response begins the process of fundamentally restructuring children's protective services to increase focus on family reunification and support. Successful statewide roll-out is the next step to move us to a position of national leadership. |
| Support children in out-of-home placement | RED YELLOW | RED YELLOW | RED ↑ YELLOW | RED ↑ YELLOW | Availability of foster care continues to be problematic. Consistency of monthly health and safety visits is very good. Despite significant progress, services for foster children is in yellow status until certain outstanding service levels (i.e., Braam) are met. |

Achieving the goal of national leadership in these service areas is a product of the contributions of many players, including the Governor, the Legislature, state agencies, counties, cities, non-profit organizations and others, including the citizens themselves. This "Washington's Commitment" section looks at the world through the client's eyes and asks how successful we are as a state at transforming the life of the client without immediate regard to the reason.

The reasons are critically important, of course, but for the client the first concern is always whether the needed service is available and effective. It is too frequently the case that the DSHS staff are doing exceptional work, but

excessive caseloads, not enough funding, or other program gaps create severe unmet needs and drive poor grades for Washington’s Commitment. DSHS staff are committed to always working to improve our performance and to meet clients’ needs.

The Washington’s Commitment scorecard and the Performance scorecard in this plan are denoted by color as follows:

- Green equates to strong performance and service or dramatic improvement in the area
- Yellow to areas of concern or unmet need, or both.
- Red to serious concern or serious unmet need, or both.
- Where there is a positive movement it is denoted by an upward arrow and where we have achieved national leadership it is indicated by a coveted gold star.
- Some measures are new in the 2015-2017 strategic plan. For these measures, preliminary color codes have been established in muted colors, however, they are necessarily subject to change as more data becomes available.

CA Performance Scorecard

In the CA Performance scorecard we measure ourselves against our yardstick of being the national leader in our spheres of service by setting goals and grading our performance for specific elements of the work we do that advances our mission in that specific area. For example, the “Washington Commitment” measure of “keeping children safe” is measured against four different performance measures, including the high percentage of alleged child victims seen by a social worker within 24 hours of the intake in emergent cases.

CA’s current scorecard is shown below.

Each target item on this CA Performance scorecard forms part of our strategic plan, in addition to five new strategic objectives and success measures that have been added to this year’s strategic plan.

The measures that are new to this plan are denoted as “New in the 2015-17 plan.” The detailed discussion of all measures – including a statement of their importance; a quantified success measure; a timeline; and an action plan – form our strategic plan. While the summary scorecard provides a simple color-coded evaluation for most of these measures, you will find very detailed performance data included below.

Performance data is updated quarterly and can be found at:

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/data/metrics/CA.pdf%20-%20page=1>



Children's Administration

Keep Children Safe

↓ Strategic Objective Number

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|---|------------|------------|------------|----------------------------|
| 1.1 | Prompt face-to-face contact with alleged victims of child abuse  | ★ GREEN | ★ GREEN | ★ GREEN | GREEN |
| 1.2 | Children in care receiving regular health and safety visits | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN |
| 1.3 | Children not subject to new founded allegations of abuse  | RED | RED | RED | RED |
| 1.4 | Create a quality assurance process to review cases with 10 or more screened-in intakes over a three-year period | | | | New in 15-17 plan GREEN |

Strengthen families

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 2.1 | Children are not reentering placement | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | RED |

Support foster children

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 3.1 | Out-of-home care stability | YELLOW | YELLOW | YELLOW | YELLOW |
| 3.2 | Length of stay in out-of-home care  | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW |
| 3.3 | Braam measures | | | | New in 2015-17 plan YELLOW |
| 3.4 | Timely completions of home studies | | | | New in 2015-17 plan YELLOW |

Other mission critical goals

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|---|------|--------|--------|----------------------------|
| 4.1 | Racially disproportionate impacts | RED | RED | RED | ↑ RED |
| 4.2 | Memorandum of Agreement with Tribal governments | RED | YELLOW | YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW |
| 4.3 | Timely completion of employee investigations | | | | New in 2015-17 plan RED |
| 4.4 | Recruitment and retention of qualified staff | | | | New in 2015-17 plan RED |



Our strategic plan is organized around this reporting structure as outlined in the CA Performance scorecard.

A note of caution: It is not really possible to fully separate our performance at CA from the challenges of funding. The Governor and the state Legislature work with limited resources and so do we. As a result, we have red status in areas in which the performance of the CA team is exemplary given the current resources, but the unmet need is so great that only red status evaluation is appropriate. Importantly, in virtually every area summarized on the CA Performance scorecard we have quantified performance measures to make better use of the resources we have and to have a better measure of our progress as an administration.

Governor Jay Inslee’s Results Washington Goals

CA is a partner in Governor Jay Inslee’s **Results Washington**, a focused effort to create effective, efficient and accountable government.

Results Washington Goal Area number 4 is Healthy and Safe Communities. Under this goal area, CA has lead responsibility for four success metrics under the *Safe People: Protection and Prevention* success indicator. CA’s three **Results Washington** success metrics:

- Decrease percentage of children with founded allegation of abuse or neglect who have a new founded allegation within 12 months.
- Decrease the percentage of children in out-of-home placement for children in state foster care.
- Increase the percentage of child victims seen by a social worker within 24 hours of the intake in emergent cases.
- Maintain the percentage of child victims in non-emergency Child Protective Services intakes seen by a social worker within 72 hours of the intake.

Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Goals

DSHS has five broad goals: Health, Safety, Protection, Quality of Life and Public Trust.

Children’s Administration has the following strategic objectives in support of the DSHS goals:

Safety:

- Maintain the high percentage of alleged child victims seen by a social worker within 24 hours of the intake in emergent cases.
- Maintain the high percentage of alleged child victims seen by a social worker within 72 hours of the intake in non-emergent cases.
- Maintain the high percentage of children in placement who received a visit to evaluate their health and safety during a calendar month in which they were in care.
- Decrease the percentage of children with a founded allegation of abuse or neglect who have a new founded allegation within 12 months.

Protection:

- Complete a special review of all cases with 10 or more screened-in intakes over a three-year period.
- Increase the percentage of children not reentering placement within 12 months of reunification.

| DSHS Goals |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Health – Each individual and each community will be healthy.● Safety – Each individual and each community will be safe.● Protection – Each individual who is vulnerable will be protected.● Quality of Life – Each individual in need will be supported to attain the highest possible quality of life.● Public Trust – Strong management practices will ensure quality and efficiency. |



Quality of Life:

- Increase the percentage of all children currently in care for at least one year who have not moved within 12 months of their previous move or their entry into placement.
- Decrease the percentage of children in foster care longer than five years.

Public Trust:

- Decrease the disparate ratio of minority-to-white children who remain in out-of-home care for more than two years.
- Increase the number of Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) completed between Tribes and regional child welfare offices.

Acting Secretary's Special Focus Areas

DSHS Acting Secretary Pat Lashway has highlighted the following four focus areas for CA during this strategic plan period:

- Finish the work of Braam by closing out the remaining measures by July 2017;
- Decrease the percentage of children with a founded allegation of abuse and neglect who have a new founded allegation within 12 months from 9.7 percent to 6 percent by July 2017;
- Set a baseline for and increase the timeliness of home studies;
- Close out all CA human resources investigations within an average of 30 days (excluding good cause concerns) by July 2017.

Strategic Plan

Below are the details of our strategic plan to meet our strategic objectives. Each strategic objective includes a statement of its importance, a qualification of a success measure and a timeline for achieving it and, most importantly, an action plan.

CA strategic objectives are monitored and updated quarterly online at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ppa/strategic.shtml>.



Strategic Objectives, Importance, Success Measures and Action Plans

1. Keeping Children Safe

Strategic Objective 1.1.a: The high percentage of alleged child victims seen by a social worker within 24 hours of the intake in emergent cases will be maintained.

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 1.1 | Prompt face-to-face contact with alleged victims of child abuse  | ★ GREEN | ★ GREEN | ★ GREEN | ★ GREEN |

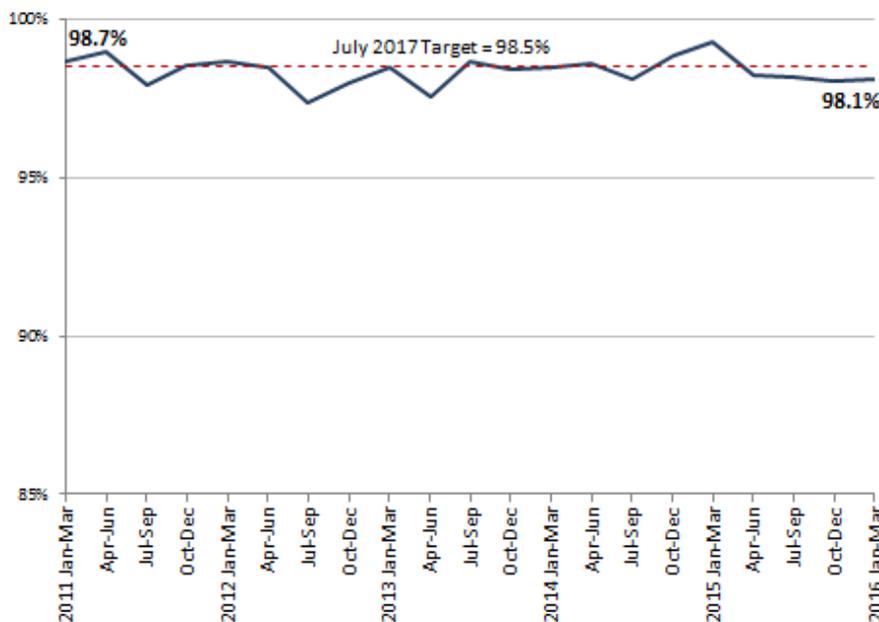
Importance: To ensure the safety of children in emergent cases, they must be seen quickly after an intake is received. Research has shown that children seen quickly are less likely to suffer additional harm.

Success Measure: The percentage of children in emergent Child Protective Services intakes who are seen by a social worker within 24 hours of the intake will remain at or higher than 98.5 percent.

Action Plan:

- CA staff conducted a Lean process on this objective. Please see attached A-3 for the detailed action plan.
- A series of email reminders identify alleged victims who have not been seen and will help to identify documentation/coding errors.
- Performance will continue to be monitored and additional strategies will be developed as needed.

Chart 1.1.a. Percent of child victims in emergent Child Protective Service intakes who were seen by a social worker within 24 hours of the intake



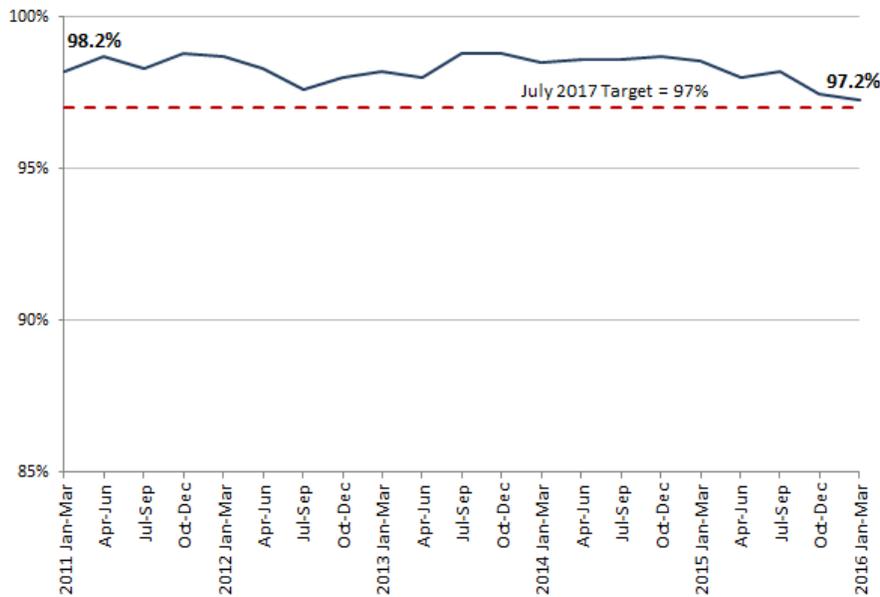
See analysis and plan at: [CA Action Plan 1.1.a – 24 hour emergent response](#)

Strategic Objective 1.1.b. The high percentage of alleged child victims seen by a social worker within 72 hours of the intake in non-emergent cases will be maintained.

Importance: To ensure the safety of children in non-emergent cases, they must be seen quickly after an intake is received. Research has shown that children seen quickly are less likely to suffer additional harm.

Success Measure: The percentage of children in non-emergent Child Protective Services intakes who are seen by a social worker within 72 hours of the intake will remain at or higher than 97 percent.

Chart 1.1.b. Percent of child victims in non-emergent Child Protective Service intakes who were seen by a social worker within 72 hours of the intake



Strategic Objective 1.2: Maintain the high percentage of children in placement who received a visit to evaluate their health and safety during a calendar month they were in care.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1.2 Children in care receiving regular health and safety visits | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN |

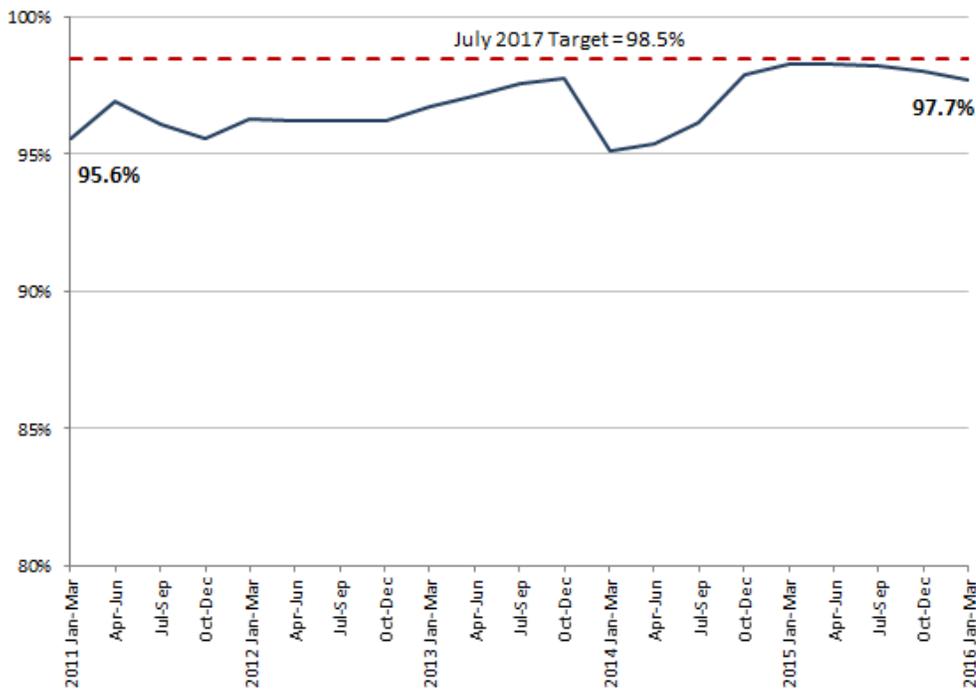
Importance: When the state takes responsibility for a child, it has an obligation to ensure that child’s safety. To ensure the continued safety and well-being of children in care, social workers must conduct regular monthly visits.

Success Measure: The percentage of children receiving a health and safety visit during a calendar month will increase from 97.7 percent in January 2015 to 98.5 percent by July 2017.

Action Plan:

- Completion of health and safety visits is monitored and reported regularly at an office and worker level to support ongoing improvement.
- Regular case reviews are conducted in each office. One item reviewed is the number and substance of health and safety visits. These reviews allow us to track, by office, how well we are performing.
- A weekly automated email notification to Social Service Specialists and supervisors, which identifies children who require a monthly health and safety visit during the current month, has been implemented.

Chart 1.2 Percent of children in placement who received a visit to evaluate their health and safety during a calendar month they were in care



Note: For some months, performance is impacted by the number of work days in a month.

Strategic Objective 1.3: Percentage of children with a founded allegation of abuse or neglect who have a new founded allegation within 12 months, excluding reports in the first 14 days, will decrease.

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|--|------|------|------|------|
| 1.3 | Children not subject to new founded allegations of abuse | | | RED | |
| | | | | RED | RED |

Importance: The effects of child abuse or neglect on victims can be devastating. Stopping the cycle is critical for the continued well-being of the children involved.

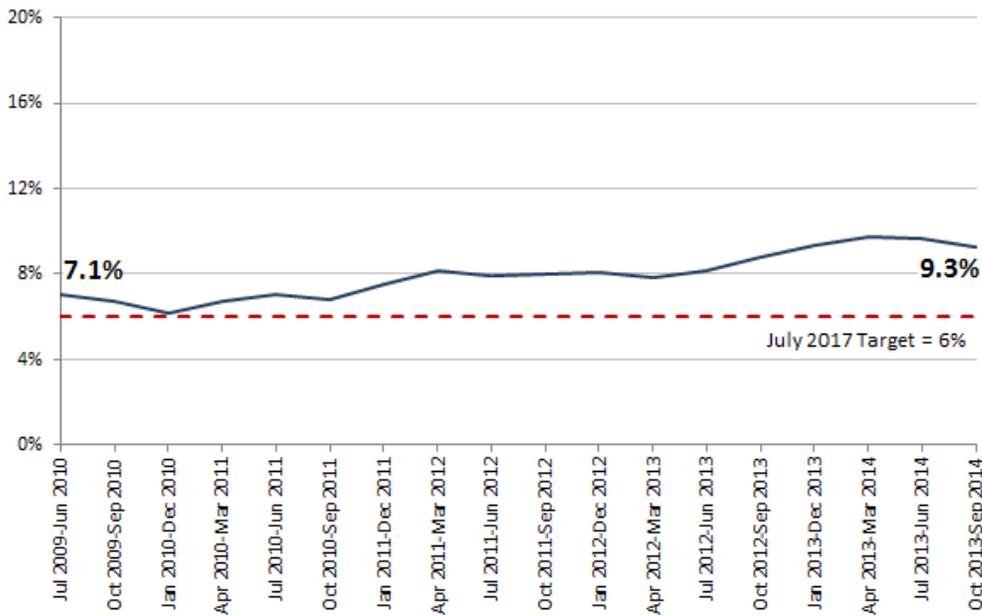
Success Measure: The percentage of children with a founded allegation of abuse or neglect who have a new founded allegation within 12 months will decrease from 9.7 percent to 6 percent by July 2017.



Action Plan:

- CA staff conducted a Lean process on this objective. Please see the attached A-3 for the detailed action plan.
- Practice tools used by social workers have been enhanced to improve the comprehensive assessment of family needs and issues that affect child safety.
- The use of evidence-based services is being expanded statewide to ensure families are receiving services that effectively address their needs.
- Contracts for services are being transitioned to performance-based contracts so provider’s performance can be measured.
- Implementation of FAR will provide families with supports and resources, with the goal to safely and successfully parent their children without recurrence of abuse or neglect. Expansion of FAR statewide should positively affect this measure.

Chart 1.3 Percent of children with a founded allegation of abuse or neglect who have a new founded allegation within 12 months, excluding reports in the first 14 days



See analysis and plan at: [CA Action Plan 1.3 – Recurrence of Maltreatment](#)



Strategic Objective 1.4: Implement a process to review cases with 10 or more screened-in intakes over a three-year period.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|---|------|------|------------------------------|
| 1.4 | Create a quality assurance process to review cases with 10 or more screened-in intakes over a three year period | | | New in 2015-17 plan GREEN |

Importance: Several recent cases have revealed multiple intakes involving a single family. It is important to have a system that brings those cases to the attention of staff so we can learn from them and improve practice and services accordingly.

Success Measure: Conduct a review on 100 percent of cases with 10 or more screened-in intakes over a three-year period starting in November 2015.

Action Plan:

- Once a “repeating” case is identified for review (done automatically in FamLink) the regional Quality Practice Specialist will review it with the supervisor and case worker to identify areas for improvement.
- Review results are shared with the assigned supervisor and case worker and may include practice recommendations to address child safety and improve outcomes for children and families.
- A follow-up review of the case will be conducted within 30 days.
- After six months, all data will be reviewed and practice recommendations that affect administration will be entered into the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) system.



2. Strengthening Families

Strategic Objective 2.1: Percentage of children not reentering placement within 12 months of reunification will increase.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 2.1 Children are not re-entering placement | GREEN | GREEN | GREEN | RED |

Importance: It can be harmful to children to experience multiple placement episodes.

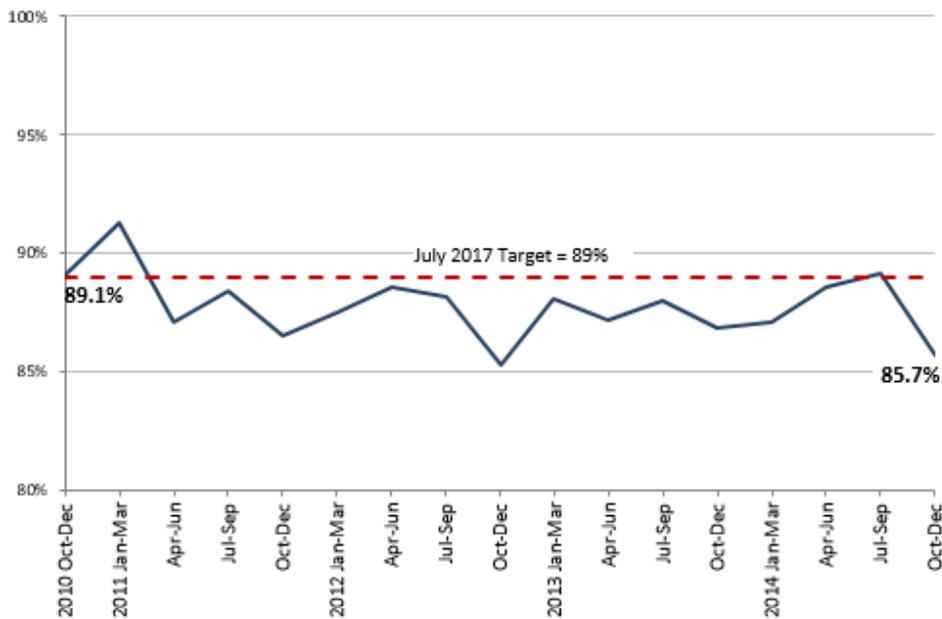
Success Measure: The percentage of children not reentering placement within 12 months of reunification will increase from 85.5 percent in January 2015 to 89 percent by July 2017.

Action Plan:

- Monthly health and safety visits assure families are safe, supported and stable during the six-month transition home period before dependencies are dismissed.
- Family Team Decision Making meetings are used at the time of reunification to engage families in identifying strengths, needs and resources to support a successful transition home.
- The use of evidence-based services is being expanded statewide to ensure that families are receiving services that are addressing their needs and supporting child safety and stability.



Chart 2.1 Percent of Children not reentering placement within 12 months of reunification



3. Supporting Foster Children

Strategic Objective 3.1: Percentage of all children currently in care for at least one year who have not moved within 12 months of their previous move or their entry into placement will increase.

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 3.1 | Out-of-home care stability | YELLOW | YELLOW | YELLOW | YELLOW |

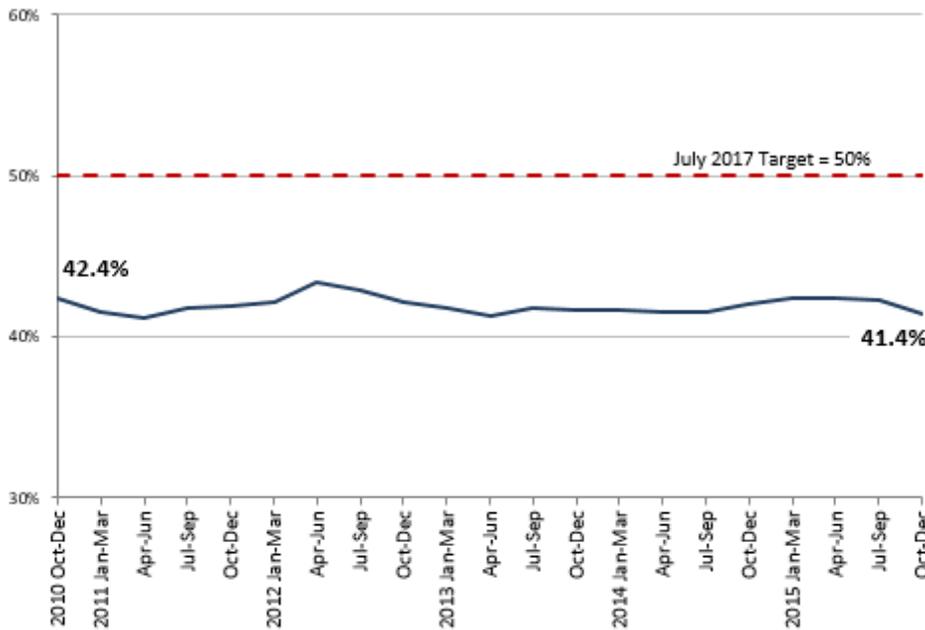
Importance: Children in safe, stable placements are likely to be healthier and better adjusted.

Success Measure: The percentage of children currently in care for at least one year who have not moved within 12 months of their previous move or their entry into placement will increase from 42.3 percent in January 2015 to 50 percent by July 2017.

Action Plan:

- Increase supports for licensed caregivers and relatives caring for children in the child welfare system, including creating regional teams to address licensing barriers and providing staff and caregiver training to meet the unique needs of relatives caring for children.
- Recruit and retain more foster families.
- Continue to complete monthly health and safety visits to assure families are safe, supported and stable and that resource needs are identified in a timely manner.
- Use Family Team Decision Making meetings to identify needs and resources to stabilize youth in out-of-home care and minimize placement moves.

Chart 3.1 Percentage of all children currently in care for at least one year who have not moved within 12 months of their previous move or their entry into placement



Strategic Objective 3.2: Percentage of children in out-of-home placement longer than five years will decrease.

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|-----|------------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 3.2 | Length of stay in out-of-home care |  | | | |
| | | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW | ↑ YELLOW |

Importance: All children who cannot safely reside with their parents deserve a safe, permanent home.

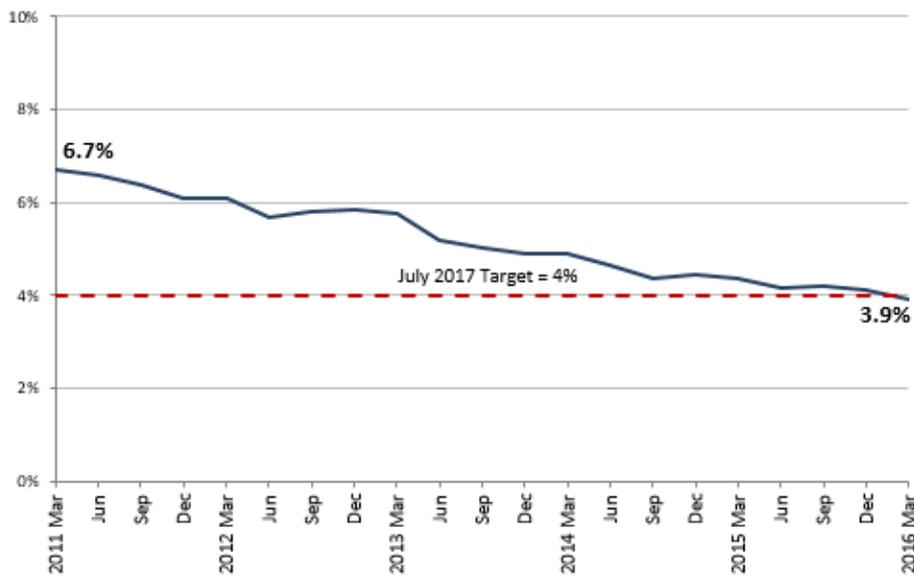
Success Measure: The percentage of dependent children in Division of Children and Family Services out-of-home placement for five years or more will decrease from 4.5 percent in January 2015 to 4 percent by July 2017.

Action Plan:

- CA developed an internal team with statewide representation that meets to focus on permanency issues.
- Statewide permanency CQI team was formed, including external stakeholders, to identify practice improvements for timely permanency and develop a permanency CQI plan.
- Permanency training curriculum was developed in partnership with the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence. The curriculum will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis.



Chart 3.2 Number of DSHS children by length of stay in out-of-home care



See analysis and plan at: [CA Action Plan 3.2 – Permanency](#)

Strategic Objective 3.3: Meet remaining Braam measures.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|--------------------------------------|
| 3.3 Braam measures | | | | New in 2015-17 plan YELLOW |

Importance: The original Braam Settlement Agreement (July 2004 - October 2011) included outcomes, benchmarks and action steps in six key areas including:

- Placement stability,
- Mental health,
- Foster parent training and information,
- Unsafe and inappropriate placements,
- Sibling separation and
- Services to adolescents

The 2006 Braam Settlement Implementation Plan identified 33 outcomes and 83 action items for monitoring and reporting. Performance data was reported every six months until FY2009; after that performance was reported annually.

Effective Nov. 1, 2011, the DSHS and plaintiffs' attorneys reached a Revised Settlement and Exit Agreement. The Revised Agreement details 21 enforceable outcomes and identifies the full compliance measure, data source and reporting periods for each outcome. The Revised Agreement states that “the Department will be deemed to be in full compliance with an individual outcome if it achieves the ‘full compliance measure’ for 18 consecutive months.” Once the department has met the full compliance measure for an outcome for 18 consecutive months, the outcome is no longer enforceable and is no longer monitored under the agreement.

Success Measure: The remaining **seven** Braam measures will be met or exceeded.

Action Plan: For the remaining seven outcomes listed below, CA will continue to monitor the effectiveness of improvement strategies implemented and find new ways to impact performance. The department has satisfied one outcome and achieved 12 months’ compliance with another.

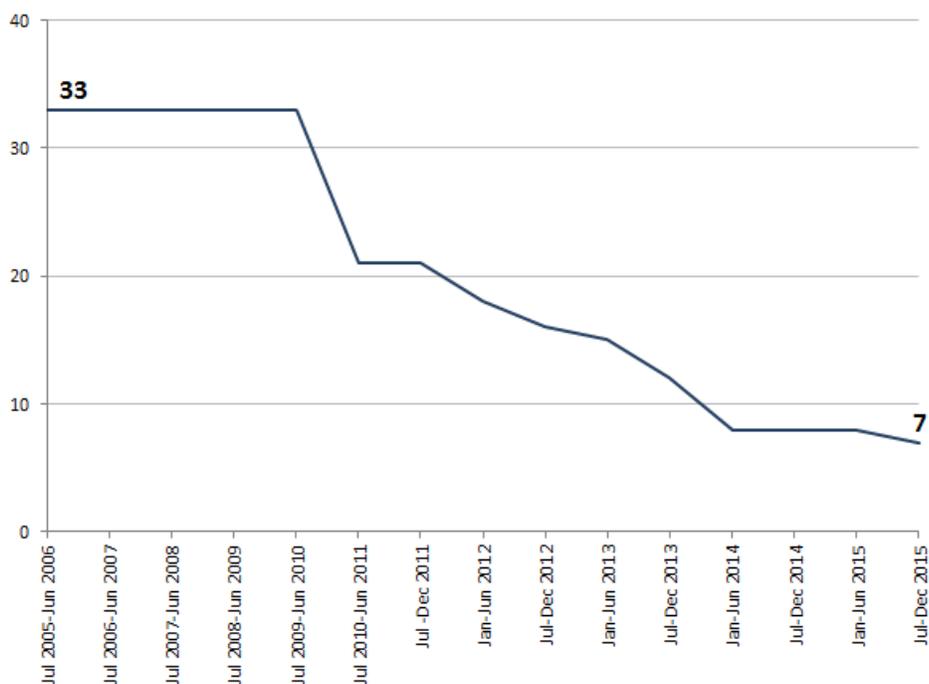
Chart 3.3.a Braam Settlement Agreement Outcome Status

| Outcome | Total Months of Compliance | Target | March 2016 Performance |
|---|----------------------------|---------|------------------------|
| Monthly Visits | 18 | 90% | 91% |
| Caregiver Information | 12 | 90% | 93% |
| Caseload | 0 | 90% | 86% |
| Caregiver Training | 0 | 90% | 85% |
| Caregiver Support | 0 | 90% | 75% |
| Frequency of Youth on Runaway Status | 0 | 2.35% | 2.90% |
| Median Number of Days Youth are on Runaway Status | 0 | 25 Days | 45 Days |

The above chart is based on July 2015 through December 2015 data



Chart 3.3.b Number of Measures Monitored under Braam Agreement



Strategic Objective 3.4: Set a baseline for completion of and increase the number of home studies.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---|------|------|------|-------------------------------|
| 3.4 Timely completions of home studies | | | | New in 2015-17 plan YELLOW |

Importance: Children need to be cared for by families that are able to meet their unique needs and provide a safe and nurturing home environment.

Success Measure: Set an appropriate baseline for timely completion of home studies.

Action Plan:

- DLR streamlined the process for submitting a home study application.
- DLR developed a system to improve the tracking of home study applications and provided support to the applicants.
- DLR continues to work with Children's Administration Technology Services to improve the reliability of FamLink data regarding home studies.



4. Other Critical Goals

Strategic Objective 4.1: Disparate ratio of minority-to-white children who remain in out-of-home care for more than two years will decrease.

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|--|------|
| 4.1 Racially disproportionate impacts | RED | RED | YELLOW  | |

Importance: Children of color should not be over-represented in out-of-home care.

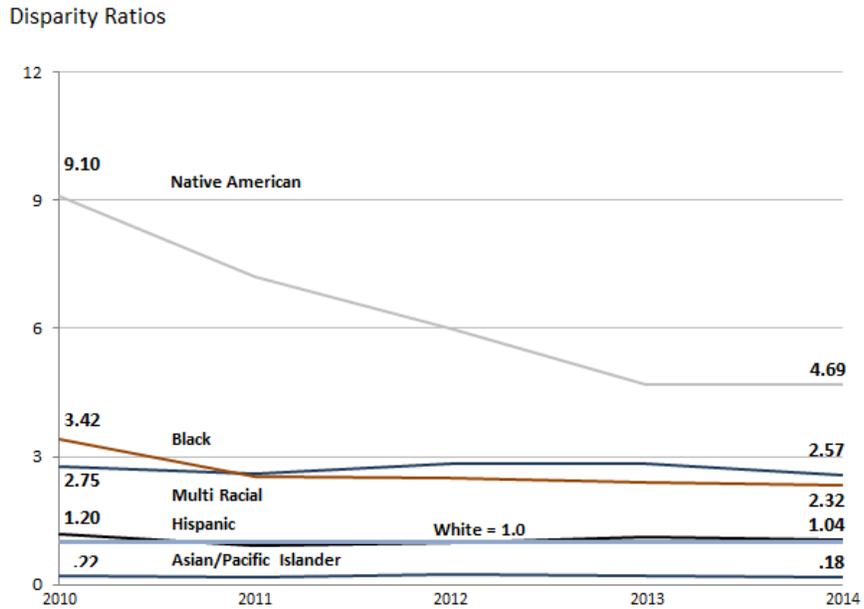
Success Measure: The average ratio of minority children placed at higher rates than white children who remain in out-of-home care for more than two years will decrease from 3.79 in January 2015 to 3.0 by July 2017.

Action Plan:

- CA staff conducted a Lean process on this objective. Please see attached A-3 for the detailed Action Plan.
- The department engages in disproportionality awareness and bias-reduction training (through the Alliance) as a vital step in efforts to reduce disproportionality in the child welfare system.
- The Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee has identified length of stay as an area of focus for CA, specifically the reduction of long-term foster care as a plan for children and youth of color.
- Regional disproportionality leads monitor length of stay by race/ethnicity and develop recommendations that drive outcomes for children of color.
- CA has contracted with Olive Crest to increase the pool of potential caregivers and placement options across the state, particularly for Native American, African American and multiracial children.

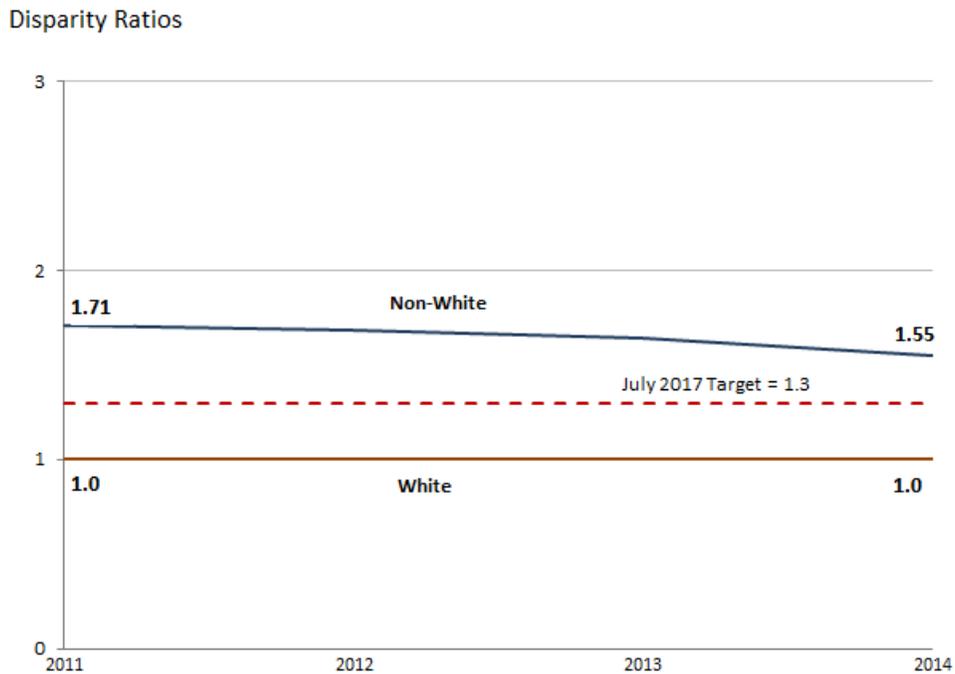


Chart 4.1.a Disparity ratio of minority to white children who remain in out-of-home care for more than two years—the proportion of the child population in care over two years for the specified racial/ethnic group compared to the white population in care over two years



See analysis and plan at: [CA Action Plan 4.1 –Disproportionality](#)

Chart 4.1.b Disparity ratio of minority to white children who remain in out-of-home care for more than two years—the proportion of the non-white child population in care over two years compared to the white population in care over two years



Strategic Objective 4.2: Number of Memoranda of Agreement completed between Tribes and regional child welfare offices will increase.

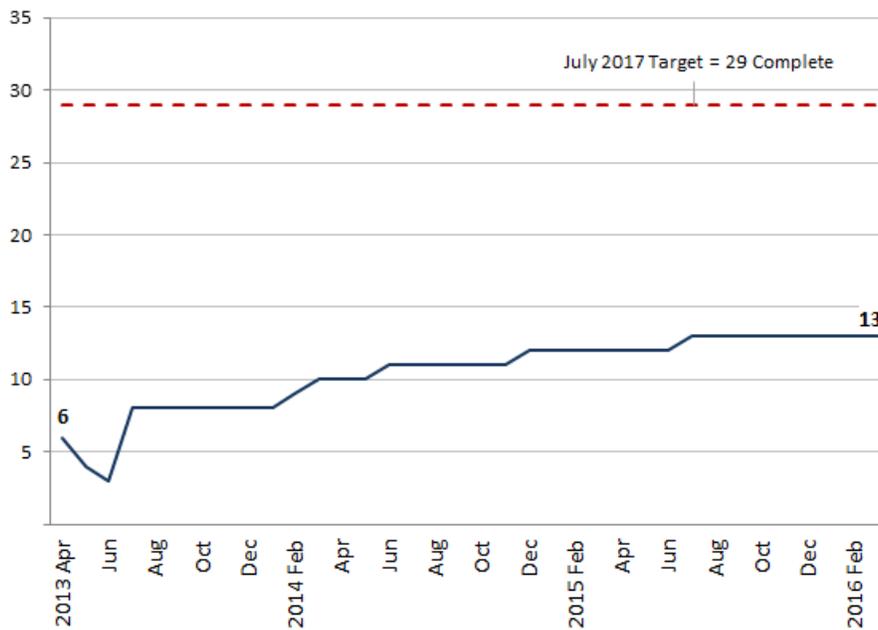
| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|------------|---|------|--------|--------|-------------|
| 4.2 | Memorandum of Agreement with Tribal governments | RED | YELLOW | YELLOW | YELLOW ↑ |

Importance: It is important to know how different Tribes interact with the state in child welfare cases to better serve native children and show respect for sovereignty of Tribes.

Success Measure: The number of Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) completed between Tribes and Children's Administration will increase from 12 in January 2015 to 29 by July 2017.

Action Plan: CA field and headquarters staff are actively engaging Tribes, providing support and problem-solving barriers to completion of and updates to MOAs.

Chart 4.2 Number of Memoranda of Agreement (MOAs) completed between Tribes and regional child welfare offices



Strategic Objective 4.3: The average number of days to complete an employee investigation will decrease.

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|------------|--|------|------|------|----------------------------|
| 4.3 | Timely completion of employee investigations | | | | New in 2015-17 plan RED |

Importance: Employee investigations should be completed accurately, fairly and timely.

Success Measure: The average number of days to complete an employee investigation will decrease to an average of 30 days by July 2017.

Action Plan:

- CA will make full use of the Employee Investigations Management System (EIMS) to track employee investigations.
- CA will create a statewide unit responsible for completing all employee investigations. This unit will maintain proficiency in employee investigations and EIMS.
- CA will continue to strengthen existing partnerships with the Human Resources Division and Washington State Patrol.
- CA will improve the process for requesting IT assistance for investigations involving allegations of misuse of data, electronic devices or computers.

Strategic Objective 4.4: CA will retain a skilled and ready workforce.

| | | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|------------|--|------|------|------|----------------------------|
| 4.4 | Recruitment and retention of qualified staff | | | | New in 2015-17 plan RED |

Importance: Public child welfare services are best provided by a fully staffed, stable workforce of highly qualified, compassionate and committed professionals.

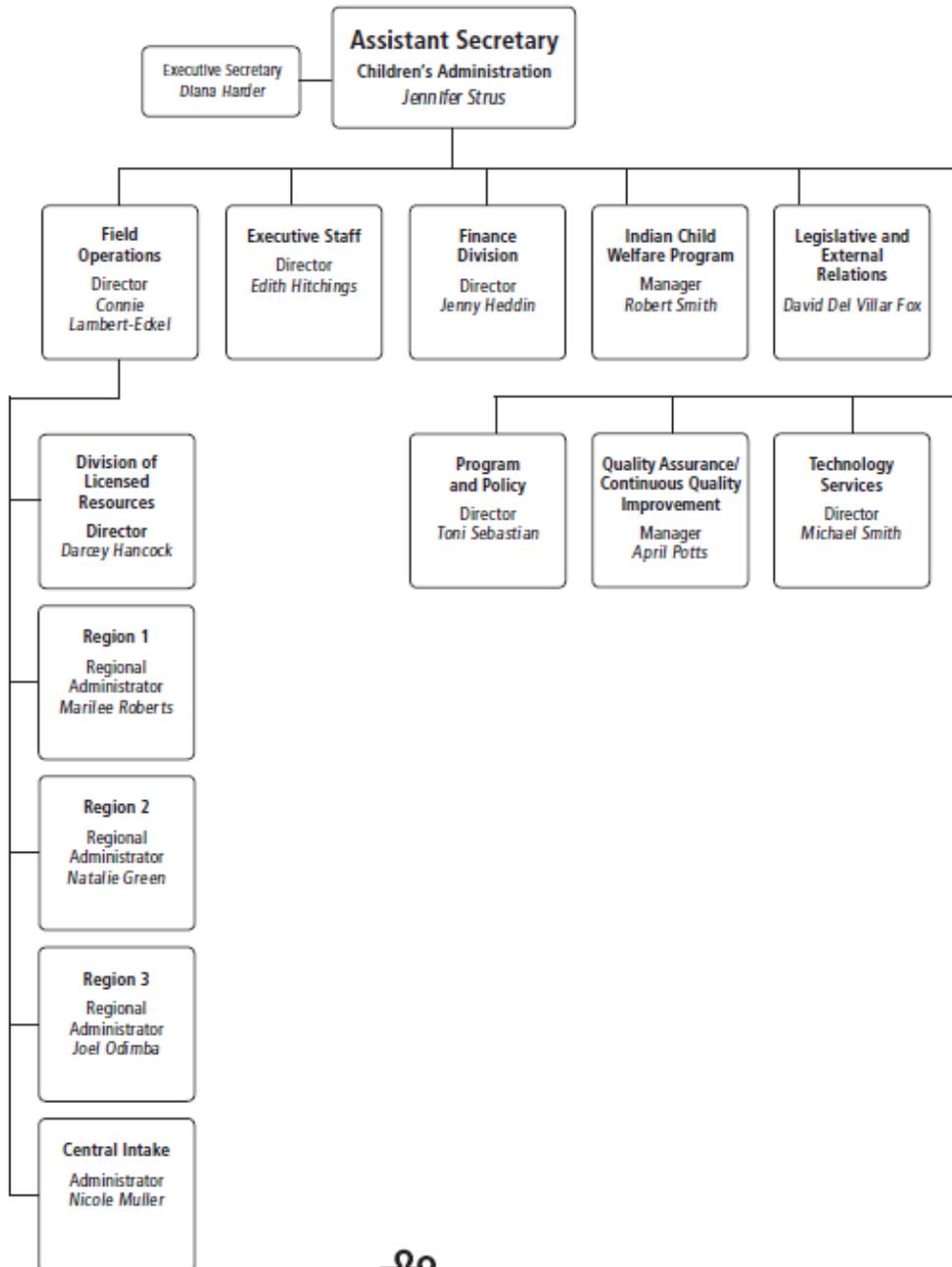
Success Measure: CA will identify root causes impacting retention of Social Service Specialists by September 2017. Job satisfaction is key to retaining staff. A major factor in job satisfaction is recognition for work well done. CA will raise by 8 percent (to 63 percent) the number of employees reporting recognition for a job well done as measured by the 2019 employee survey results.

Action Plan:

- CA will continue to use feedback gathered from a 2015 employee survey about worker retention to identify areas of improvement.
- CA will explore approaches to shorten timeframes for filling open Social Service Specialist positions.
- CA will revise the current job qualifications to make sure experience is valued as equally as education.
- CA will use effective and continuous recruitment.
- Develop and deliver training on hiring, selecting and retaining staff to supervisors and managers.
- Conduct exit surveys routinely and use the information gathered to improve retention practices.
- Before the October 2017 employee survey, CA will:
 - Survey or conduct focus groups with Social Service Specialists and their supervisors to identify reasons for staff turnover; and
 - Perform a root cause analysis on retention.



Organizational Chart
 Department of Social and Health Services
 Children's Administration



Sept. 15, 2016