

**California Permanency for Youth Project
Sonoma County Plan: Phase II (2007)**

Vision Statement: Every child who enters placement in Sonoma County will have an early permanency plan developed, which includes the identification of at least one relative or significant other who will commit to maintaining a permanent connection to the child

Mission Statement: To provide safe placements for children entering care while maintaining children's community and familial relationships

Target Population: All youth who enter placement

Review of Phase I

Successes:

- Sonoma County was quickly able to engage community partners such as group homes, State Adoptions, family service agencies, the SRJC Kinship Education Department, minors' attorneys and Mental Health personnel
- The Independent Living Program social workers are fully engaged
- The partners have taken the time to attend regular meetings of the steering committee and participate in case staffings for mutual youth
- The partners have begun to engage youth in their programs in discussions about what permanency means to them and about searching for relatives or other connections
- About 30 youth have been identified as needing connections and many of these have commitments from relatives or significant others; new youth are identified monthly
- There is strong commitment from managers and executives in the division and the department

Challenges:

- Workload size continues to be a challenge for social workers
- Lifelong Connections crosses many program areas and agencies; sometimes territorial issues need to be resolved
- As with any new change, staff can be slow to embrace new programs or new ways of doing business

Surprises:

- Some youth already had informal connections
- There is no one-size-fits-all permanency definition
- Sonoma County group homes were quick to embrace a new philosophy

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Work to be completed:

- How to define permanency
- More intense youth engagement required
- More social worker 'buy-in' essential
- Integration of LLC into all program areas
- Integration of new LLC position into agency work processes

Training Issues:

- Darla Henry on Engaging Youth and Engaging Potential Connections to be scheduled
- All social workers and supervisors encouraged to attend
- Training on permanency to be available to all partners, staff from other programs, foster parents and adoptive parents
- All core training to include permanency
- Family Group Conferencing facilitation training to be explored

Champions:

- More champions need to be developed
- Several social workers 'got it' over the course of Phase I
- Target is for more social workers during Phase II to become champions
- Supervisors must be enthused; they are the key to social worker engagement
- Community partners were early facilitators of permanency discussions with youth

Youth identified during Phase I:

- 46 youth have been identified for LLC
- There are 429 known relatives for these youth
- 58 additional relatives have been identified
- 71 contacts have been made on behalf of youth
- THPP youth have been added to LLC
- As many youth as possible need to be identified for Phase II

Positions allocated:

- One FTE (permanent, non case-carrying Lifelong Connections specialist)
- Works in tandem with a placement specialist
- Both positions added to a Permanent Placement/Adoptions unit
- Research ongoing for funding or grants that could be leveraged for additional staff
- Advocacy for FY 2008/2009 allocation/staffing critical

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Partnerships:

- State Adoptions
- SRJC Kinship Education Department
- Alternative Family Services
- True to Life Children's Center
- Valley of the Moon Children's Home
- Minors' Attorneys
- Mental Health Department
- Independent Living Program
- AB 490 Education Liaison

Possible partnerships:

- CalWORKS/SonomaWORKS
- Adult and Aging
- Sonoma Family Kinship Center
- Dependency Court
- Juvenile Probation
- Tribal Representatives
- Redwood Empire Foster Parents Association
- CASA

Expectations of managers and supervisors:

- Managers develop and convey expectations regarding permanency
- Managers communicate mission to supervisors
 - a) supervisors' meetings
 - b) individual conferences with unit supervisors
- Supervisors communicate mission to staff
 - a) unit meetings
 - b) individual conferences
 - c) case staffings
 - d) training on permanency made available to all staff and partners

Ongoing support:

- Monthly LLC Steering Committee meetings
- Monthly case staffings (partners are invited)
- Technical and evaluation assistance from CPYP
 - a) quarterly meetings with Child Welfare Director
 - b) monthly meetings with LLC staff, supervisors, managers, partners

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Siblings/Adoptions:

- Siblings are included in all permanency work with youth
- Adoptions do not preclude family connections
- Need strong engagement with State Adoptions
- Adoptive parents and foster parents can be connections

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Phase II

Definition of Permanency: Work in progress

Area	Responsibility	Deliverables	Due Date
I. Phase II Plan	Mignon Evans	1. Develop and write plan 2. Monitor monthly 3. Solicit input from supervisors/managers/director	May 2007 Ongoing Ongoing
II. Administration	Nick Honey; Mignon Evans; Bob Harper; Fred Jones; Shari Hawkins; Karen McClure Karen Price Mignon Evans; Kerry Stokes Mignon Evans; Kerry Stokes Analysts	1. Review/revise Vision Statement 2. Define ‘permanency’ 3. Communicate to staff a) division meetings b) unit meetings c) supervisor meetings d) managers’ meetings 4. Contract for Accurint 5. Develop protocol for staff search requests 6. Develop process for database updates a) partners to social workers b) social workers to case file c) social workers to search specialist d) access to database 7. Review policy/procedure a) Where to integrate LLC (ER, ILP, FM, FR, PP) b) Where to amend policy	May 2007 June 2007 Ongoing May 2007 May 2007 May 2007 September 2007

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III. Practice	Nick Honey Bob Harper Placement supervisors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convey definition of permanency to all staff 2. Involve all youth in permanency planning 3. Explore plans for youth group with ILP social workers 4. Have social workers approach youth 5. Assess whether youth should participate in case staffings 6. Supervise to permanency 7. Staff each case and revisit monthly 8. All permanency planning to involve Lifelong Connections 9. Monthly visits to youth to include Lifelong Connections dialogue 10. FY&C Joint Labor/ Management Committee 	September 2007
IV. Training	Mardi; Nick; Mignon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CPYP to schedule Darla Henry trainings (4 days) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Engaging and preparing youth for permanency b) Engaging and preparing potential connections c) Grief and loss 2. Establish target audience 	September 2007

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		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. CPYP to schedule “Youthful Intelligence for Supervisors” (1/2 day) 4. HSD Training Development Manager to schedule additional trainings 5. All staff encouraged to attend trainings: (CPYP requires minimum attendance to schedule) 6. LLC staff to attend Northern California County meetings 7. LLC staff to participate in conference calls 8. LLC staff to attend annual CPYP conference 	<p>September 2007</p> <p>FY 07/08</p> <p>Weekly conferences</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>November</p>
V. Outreach	Mignon; Fred; Shari; Nick	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop concrete ideas for engagement/education of community partners <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) courts b) Mental Health c) Probation d) Public Health e) Adult and Aging f) SRJC g) State Adoptions 2. Develop bullet points for meetings, staffings, outreach 3. Contact youth that already have permanency to share where they are 4. Convene all staff, partners, youth and interested others for a half-day ‘refresher’ 	<p>Summer 2007</p> <p>September 2007</p> <p>September 2007</p> <p>Fall 2007</p>

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VI. Data	Kerry; Mignon; Bob	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brainstorm needs and issues 2. Ensure all connections are maintained in database 3. Ensure relative facesheets follow case file <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) new case folders to be piloted 4. Ensure information communicated to evaluator 	June 2007
VII. Integration with other initiatives	Nick; Bob; Mignon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transitions for Emancipating Youth 2. AB 636 Federal Outcome Measure 8A 3. System Improvement Plan (SIP) 4. Child Welfare Services Outcomes Improvement Project (CWSOIP) 5. Transitional Housing programs: THPP and THP Plus 	June 2007
VIII. Partnerships	Mignon; Nick; Shari; Fred	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance existing partnerships and community involvement 2. Clarify expectations 3. Clarify referral process 4. Invite to trainings 5. Solicit input 6. Expand outreach efforts to new partners e.g., Sonoma Kinship Family Center, Juvenile Probation, Adult and Aging, Courts, CalWORKS 	2007/Ongoing

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