

Accomplishments

FY 2004-2005

Lisa Fraser
Council Chair





CSN Council Membership

Asset Development Network	Juvenile Justice Coordinating
Cal Poly State University	Council Chair
Child Care Planning Council	Latino Outreach Council
City Administrators	League of Women Voters
County Administrative Officer	Literacy Council
County Board of Supervisors	Mental Health Services
County Board of Supervisors'	Ministerial Association (s)
District Appointees (7)	Needs Assessment Commit-
County Counsel	tee Chair
County Superintendent of	Private Industry Council
Schools	Probation Department
Court Appointed Special	Public Health Department
Advocates (CASA)	Public Policy Committee
Criminal Justice Administrators'	Chair
Association	SLO Child Abuse Prevention
Cuesta Community College	Council (SLO-CAP)
Department of Social Services	School District Superinten-
District Attorney	dents
Drug and Alcohol Services	Sheriff's Department
Economic Opportunity	Special Education Local Plan-
Commission (EOC)	ning Area (SELPA)
Economic Self-Sufficiency	Superior Court
Partnership Chair	Transitions / Mental Health
Education and Training	Association
Committee Chair	Tri-Counties Regional Center
El Paso de Robles School CYA)	United Way
Family Care Network, Inc.	
Foster Parent Association	
Housing Authority of SLO	
Integrated Services Committee	
Chair	
Juvenile Justice Commission	

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The following information is available on the CSN Website at www.co.slo.ca.us/csn or by calling the office at (805) 781-1847:

- History of the Children's Services Network
- Description of the SAFE System of Care
- 2005 Children's Summary Report
- Recommendations for Program Funding FY 2004-2005
- More information related to topics in this report.

Message from the Chair

I would like to recognize the collaborative efforts and varied leadership roles that we bring to the CSN table. I am proud to be associated with an organization composed of 50 active representatives in a county-wide collaborative representing public, private and non-profit groups that strive to meet the following core values:

- Respect for individuals and the prevention of problems
- Encourages development and implementation of interactions, programs and services that are collaborative
- Incorporate the “best practices” of being family centered, strength based, needs driven, solution oriented and community based

This past year demonstrates improved coordination of services and most important



that CSN provides a forum for clarifying perceptions and expectations among agencies, organizations and the community. I look forward to working together to better serve the needs of children in San Luis Obispo County in the coming years. Thank you all for your support!

Lisa Fraser

Executive Director
San Luis Obispo County
Child Abuse Prevention
Council

Executive Summary

Foundations



The Children’s Services Network Council is a countywide collaborative of agency and organization directors and community members representing every aspect of children’s services.

The **MISSION** of the Children’s Services Network is advocacy to meet the needs of children, youth and families in San Luis Obispo County through the development and support of community partnerships.

Our **VISION** is safe and healthy children, youth and families learning and growing to their full potential in supportive communities.

The CSN **VALUES** respect for individuals and the prevention of problems as its first priorities.

The CSN encourages the development and implementation of interactions, programs and services that are collaborative and incorporate the “best practices” of being family centered, strength based, needs driven, solution oriented and community based.



2005 Strategic Plan

Goal 1: The CSN will identify, prioritize and advocate for the needs of children, youth and families.

- A. Establish a collaborative needs assessment process.
- B. Utilize the needs assessment finding to prioritize funding for programs.

Goal 2: The CSN will advocate for children, youth and families through its collective expertise.

- A. Present a CSN Annual Report to the Board of Supervisors each Fall
- B. In accordance with the procedure established by the County Administrative Office, submit recommendations reflecting the priorities and use them to support or oppose pending legislation affecting children, youth and families.
- C. Maintain funding for CSN operations
- D. Annually present the Central Coast Conference on Children and Youth, and other trainings as appropriate, to help educate the community about issues affecting children, youth and families.
- E. For 2005-06 advocate for and participate in local initiative development in the areas of Child Welfare Services Redesign, 0-5 service development, Mental Health Services Act and Beginnings.

2005 Strategic Plan



GOAL 3: The CSN will create and strengthen partnerships for the delivery of services to children, youth and families.

- A. Maximize funding for children, youth and families through development of blended program partnerships.
- B. Maximize funding for children and youth through knowledge/ expansion/ coordination of existing/ new funding sources
- C. Establish and maintain a membership that is representative of the community
- D. For 2005-2006 develop and implement a process to mentor and engage consumer participation
- E. Maintain an active committee structure encouraging broad representation of the CSN membership
- F. Encourage and support community exploration of the Family Resource Center (FRC) concept development, sustainability and its application to the community's local needs.

Highlights: 2004-2005

- **PREVENTION**

Beginnings, the Perinatal and Children's Teams working with **Dr. Ira Chasnoff** on issues pertaining to perinatal substance abuse have involved the local medical community in standardized screening and referral for services. The resulting data is reported in the CSN Children's Summary Report (available on the website).

The Central Coast Conference on Children and Youth featured **Bruce Perry**, M.D., Ph.D., who educated more than 400 attendees on the physical and developmental effects of trauma, abuse and neglect on children. Prevention-oriented follow-up planning is under way with **Safe from the Start**. (See page 18)



The CSN sponsored community training and conversations about the development of **Family Resource Centers** (FRCs) throughout the county and adopted a resolution to partner with local communities to support this effort.

The Integrated Services Committee researched and issued a paper on **youth suicide** prevention and intervention (available on the website).

The **Father Involvement** Study, locally called POPS (Positive Opportunities for Parenting Success), continues to engage fathers to test the effectiveness of

Highlights: 2004-2005

specific interventions to help them become and stay more involved with their families, especially very young children ages 0-5.

- **INTEGRATION**

The CSN published the **2005 Children's Summary Report**, a "report card" on the status of children, youth and families in the CSN goal areas of being safe, healthy, at home, in school and out of trouble in San Luis Obispo County.



Discussions between the San Luis Coastal Unified School District and the SAFE System of Care Management Support Team resulted in **expanding the SAFE integrated services model** into the central and coastal areas of the county.

The forced relocation of the South County SAFE hub office offered an opportunity to **address optimal service delivery across systems**.

The CSN and SLO-CAP partnered closely to bring the county into full compliance with new State **Office of Child Abuse Prevention funding guidelines**. New training and technical assistance resources are raising the level of community education and local services integration.



Highlights: 2004-2005



Members of CSN have participated in many community-driven collaboratives including Child Welfare Services Redesign, Mental Health Services Act, child abuse prevention grant planning, juvenile justice grant planning and School Readiness.



Highlights: 2004-2005

- **ADVOCACY**

The CSN annually conducts a needs assessment and services prioritization process and makes recommendations to the County Board of Supervisors and other policy-makers. The CSN also presents an annual report to the Board, including positive results for families served in the SAFE system of care.

The CSN contributed to the County Legislative Platform by identifying areas of concern for families and making recommendations to support or oppose proposed legislation and public policy. CSN Council members work with local, state and national government and organization representatives to advocate for the needs of families.

The CSN continues to advocate for a broad continuum of care for children, youth and families.

**PROGRESS REPORT
ON THE
STRATEGIC PLAN**





GOAL 1: The CSN will identify and prioritize the needs of children, youth and families.

- A. **Support a common source of information/data base detailing the needs of children, youth and families.** A study initiated by the Department of Social Services determined that it is not feasible to establish direct inter-agency data sharing at this time.
- B. **Formalize a procedure to prioritize the needs of children, youth and families.** The Needs Assessment Committee has developed an annual needs assessment and prioritization process, taking into consideration programs across the continuum of care, the ability of the specific program funding to leverage other funding, and the CSN goals of keeping children safe, healthy, at home, in school and out of trouble.
- C. **Encourage the adoption of a universal needs assessment tool.** Progress continues in this area. The ACTION for Healthy Communities survey and the CSN Children's Summary Report are key local information resources. Early child care and education needs are surveyed by the Child Care Planning Council, EOC (Head Start) and School Readiness (First 5 Commission/County Office of Education).



C. Establish a process to get feedback from consumers and other community members regarding the efficacy of service delivery in meeting needs. The CSN Council added two community “at large” representatives to its membership and continues to include consumer input in its processes whenever possible.



Progress Report on the Strategic Plan



GOAL 2: The CSN will advocate for children, youth and families through its collective expertise.

- A. Annually present priorities for children, youth and families to the County Board of Supervisors.**
The CSN generally presents the adopted funding recommendations and a report on the outcomes from the SAFE System of Care to the Board of Supervisors at least twice each year.
- B. Adopt an annual legislative platform reflecting the priorities, and use it to support or oppose pending legislation affecting children, youth and families.** This platform, when adopted by the CSN Council, is incorporated into the County platform and lobbied at both the State and Federal levels.
- C. Establish and implement a procedure to respond to significant public policy issues affecting children, youth and families.** Depending on the nature of the issue at hand, the CSN has established three ways of responding to policy and/or funding issues:



Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

1. The CSN Council developed and implemented an Issue Resolution Process to structure the discussion of complex situations and to enable the Council to come to common ground on public policy and program issues.
2. The Public Policy Committee monitors legislation and policy at the local, State and Federal levels and recommends action to the Council. Various individual members and committees foster direct communication with community residents on a wide variety of issues.
3. Requests for support or opposition are handled by the Public Policy Committee or the Integrated Services Committee (ISC). The ISC makes recommendations of support for grants and other program issues to the CSN Council.

D. Clarify the CSN's relationship with the Board of Supervisors and other governing and policy-setting entities. The CSN Council and Executive Committee meet regularly with County Administrative staff to clarify the Council's role and responsibility. The CSN is actively involved with the First Five Commission, Child Care Planning Council, Child Abuse Prevention Council, County Office of Education, Latino Outreach Council, ACTION for Healthy Communities, school districts and other leadership groups.

Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

E. Establish and maintain stable funding for CSN operations. The Council has established a suggested sliding scale schedule for member contributions to help support the cost of CSN staff and services. This community match money enables DSS to draw additional Federal funding for the administrative costs of the CSN.

F. Annually present the Central Coast Conference on Children and Youth, and other trainings as appropriate, to educate the community about issues affecting children, youth and families.

The 2005 Conference featured Bruce Perry, M.D., Ph.D., Senior Fellow of the Child Trauma Academy, a not-for-profit organization that promotes innovations in service, research and education in child maltreatment and childhood trauma. Dr. Perry has conducted both basic neuroscience and clinical research. His neuroscience research has examined the effects of prenatal drug exposure on brain development, the neurobiology of human neuro-psychiatric disorders, the neurophysiology of traumatic life events and basic mechanisms related to the development of neurotransmitter receptors





Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

in the brain. His clinical research and practice has focused on high-risk children, examining long-term cognitive, behavioral, emotional, social, and physiological effects of neglect and trauma in children, adolescents and adults. This work has been instrumental in describing how childhood experiences, including neglect and traumatic stress, change the biology of the brain and, thereby, the health of the child.

Dr. Perry worked with the California Attorney General's office to develop the Safe from the Start: Reducing Children's Exposure to Violence Initiative, a comprehensive strategy to assist communities in reducing the impact of violence on children ages 0 to 18, with an emphasis on children ages 0 to 5, who have been exposed to family, school and/or community violence.

Over 400 education, law enforcement, child development and health and human services providers attended the April conference. Further training will be brought into the county through Safe from the Start.



Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

GOAL 3: The CSN will create and strengthen partnerships for the delivery of services to children, youth and families.

The CSN maintains active ties with numerous local groups, from Head Start to County government. The outcomes and effects resulting from work on this goal are interwoven in all of our activities.

In FY 2004-05 the CSN members and partners planned and provided oversight for multiple state and federal grants, totaling almost \$370,000, for the prevention and treatment of child abuse. Some of the funding was dedicated to the on-going operation of the SAFE System of Care and other community-based prevention and early intervention infrastructure and some was allocated to individual community agency grants. In addition, the CSN partnered with DSS, the State and EOC to bring in \$400,000 per year for three years to support the Father Involvement Study (POPS, see page 22).





Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

A. Utilize partnerships to maximize funding.

Services Affirming Family Empowerment (SAFE) System of Care (SOC) There are currently seven SAFE sites and affiliates around the county, with two more expected to open in the Fall 2005 in partnership with San Luis Coastal USD. In addition to co-locating and coordinating agency staff for better service delivery, the SAFE Management Support Team (MST) has been successful in orchestrating joint financial support of several SAFE staff positions, including the Systems Coordinators, Site Coordinators and Family Advocates. This “braided funding” includes funding from the existing budgets of SAFE partners, grant funding and Medi-Cal reimbursement.

Besides saving agency staff time, money and energy, the SAFE system of care helps reduce or eliminate some of the cost to children who are born into struggling families. By providing prevention and early intervention services, SAFE staff help prevent child abuse and neglect, self-destructive behaviors and school failure and support the child and family to identify and marshal their strengths and natural resources.

Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

All case-managed children 's behavior and their family situations are assessed periodically by services staff. In FY 04-05 73% of the children with two or more assessments (at least one within the fiscal year) improved in their overall functioning in the areas of being safe, health, at home, in school and out of trouble despite the fact that these children come from home environments where 17% of the families have substantiated child abuse reports, 12% have reported domestic violence, 45% of the families have problems caused by drugs and/or alcohol, 24% of the children display behavior dangerous to themselves or others and 4% of the children have experienced arrest by law enforcement. (Some families have multiple challenges.)





Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

Father Involvement Study:

POPS (Positive Opportunities for Parenting Success) was developed by top researchers at Yale and UC Berkeley for the State Office of Child Abuse Prevention and San Luis Obispo was one of only five counties in California chosen to participate. The study will follow sixty families over three years to determine the effectiveness of the research curriculum in increasing fathers' involvement with their young children. This hard science research is being watched by interested parties around the world as it is the first fully random testing in the field. POPS is housed at the SAFE team hub office in Arroyo Grande.



The First 5 Commission:

The CSN holds a designated seat on the First 5 Commission, along with the County Board of Supervisors, County Medical Director, Director of (County) Social Services, Superintendent of Schools, Medical Society, Child Care Planning Council and two community representatives. First 5 funds community programs in the areas of Child Development and Education, Parent Education and Support, and Child Health and Well-Being for children pre-natal to



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age five and their families. Current funding supports two School Readiness programs, newborn home-visiting programs and other resources that are coordinated with existing programs and efforts such as Head Start, State Pre-School and SAFE.. For more information please visit their website at www.sanluischildren.org.

B. Establish and maintain a membership that is representative of the community and includes consumer participation

CSN liaisons regularly attend meetings of community based groups such as the Child Care Planning Council, San Luis Obispo Child Abuse Prevention Council, regional Youth Task Forces, ACTION for Healthy Communities, Preventive Health Grant Board, Prevention Alliance, School Readiness and school district advisory groups.

Community: Interested community members regularly attend CSN Council meetings and participate on committees. Community liaisons to the Council include the County Board of Supervisors' district and at large representatives, the Asset Development Network (includes the local youth task forces and coalitions), Foster Parent Association, Child Care Planning Council, Housing Authority,

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Tri-Counties Regional Center, Juvenile Justice Commission, foster family agencies, CASA/Voices for Children, United Way, Private Industry Council, SAFE Regional Coordinators, SLO-CAP, EOC, the Latino Outreach Council and the League of Women Voters. CSN committee Chairs, whether Council members or community partners, automatically become voting members of the Executive Committee and CSN Council.

C. Serve as a forum for discussion of the critical issues involving children, youth and families in our county.

The CSN Council members, all of the committee members and the designated liaisons participate in and facilitate this process. (Review the Council's processes on page 16).



Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

D . Establish and maintain an active committee structure

Efforts continue to increase member participation in the CSN and to identify potential partnerships. The current structure includes:



The Executive Committee

exercises the authority of the full Council to manage the business and affairs of the organization. This committee discusses issues and makes recommendations to the full Council, sets agenda items, oversees day-to-day operations, facilitates the flow of information and conducts the business of the Council between regular meetings. The Executive Committee is comprised of the Council officers, CSN committee Chairs, the Network Coordinator and designated County Department heads. Meetings are open to interested CSN Council members.

The **Integrated Services Committee (ISC)** has broad responsibility for planning and implementing a countywide children's system of care. Members participate as individuals or represent government agencies, faith-based and other community agencies and organizations. The SAFE system of care is discussed on pages 20-21 in this report and additional

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information is available on the website. The **Data Management Team** and the **SAFE Management Support Team (MST)** are sub-committees of the ISC. This year the MST worked with San Luis Coastal Unified School District to bring SAFE to the central and coastal areas of the county.



The ISC also takes on specific topics for review and recommendation. ISC members explored youth suicide prevention by reviewing local prevention and intervention resources and local, state and national data. The resulting report and recommendations are available on the CSN website. ISC also reviewed Child Welfare Services Redesign assessments and plans and participated as a focus group in the Mental Health Service Act planning phase.

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Economic Self-Sufficiency Partnership:

ESP addresses the overall services structure for working parents including transportation, employment, health care, literacy, child care and other issues that affect economic self-sufficiency, and serves as a strong link with the Adult Services Policy Council for family advocacy. Representatives from the Department of Social Services (DSS), Private Industry Council, Cuesta Community College, EOC, Goodwill/Shoreline Occupational Services, SLO Economic Vitality Corporation, County Health Agency, Housing Authority (City of San Luis Obispo), Child Care Planning Council, San Luis Obispo Council of Governments and CalTrans assist and support individuals and families through their advocacy for and coordination of direct services and community resources that support the development of individual and family stability and self-sufficiency.

The **Needs Assessment and Prioritization Committee** refined the annual process for prioritizing community needs for more effective resource utilization. As part of the process the Council members complete a collaborative values inventory and the results are discussed in annual strategic



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planning sessions to define the CSN's foundations. The FY 2004-05 Recommendations for Funding can be reviewed on the CSN website.

The CSN Council acts as a community oversight body for both the **Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council**, which administers the Intensive Community Diversion programs funded through AB 1913, and the county **Child Welfare Services (CWS) Redesign and AB636** efforts.



The **Education and Training Committee** presents the annual CSN Conference and other countywide trainings. These are open to all interested agency and program staff and community members, bringing “cutting edge” research and information to inspire our local planning and practice.

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The **Public Policy Committee** monitors, reports on and initiates legislation and policy recommendations at the local, state and federal levels. The group presents an annual legislative update to the CSN Council, issues timely e-mail alerts on pending legislation and drafts recommendations for the County legislative platform, which is lobbied in Sacramento and Washington DC. Committee members stay in close touch with our local representatives at all levels of government.

Recognizing the importance of the arts in expanding education and personal vision, a CSN **ad hoc committee** partners



with the Civic Ballet of San Luis Obispo to organize a free community performance of "The Nutcracker" for children and families who would not otherwise be able to attend. Each year more families participate in this magical holiday experience at the Performing Arts Center. The performers graciously meet with the audience members after the show for discussion, autographs and refreshments and it is difficult to tell who has the most fun! For many children this is truly the experience of a lifetime.



Progress Report on the Strategic Plan

The CSN Council has accomplished a great deal and remains dedicated to improving local conditions and resources. As systems and solutions become more complex we move to the next challenging tasks of making tough funding choices, using our data to guide program management and deepening our relationships with each other and with local, State and Federal governing bodies to more effectively advocate to meet the needs of children, youth and families in our county.

An Invitation....



.... to join us!

Council and committee meetings are open to all interested residents, creating an open forum for community input and participation. Please call or check the website for details.

Agendas and minutes for CSN meetings, an events calendar, reports and other information are available on the website or in hard copy.



For more information please

- visit the website www.co.slo.ca.us/csn
 - call the office 805.781.1847 or
 - email jmiller@co.slo.ca.us