Vision Statement

All children in Monterey County live in safe, nurturing homes and communities; they are healthy, valued, succeed in school and realize their full potential.

Mission Statement

The Children’s Council provides leadership and policy direction to encourage the development of a comprehensive and collaborative delivery system of services to children and youth in Monterey County.

Guiding Principles

… Collaborative – promoting cross-agency policies and procedures that enhance seamless service delivery; encourage interdisciplinary problem-solving and support; and address the barriers to success;

… Comprehensive, Coordinated and Integrated – recommending a full array of services and supports where the entire range of needs are addressed in an efficient, responsive and effective manner;

… Family-Centered and Family-Driven – honoring, respecting and empowering families as their child’s first teacher and strongest advocate;

… Culturally Responsive – ensuring diverse populations receive culturally responsive services and supports;

… Community-Based/Community Driven – ensuring that services are available and accessible in a variety of settings and locations;

… Participatory – ensuring that program recipients participate in making and shaping decisions; and

… Outcomes-Oriented – measuring outcomes for children, youth and families and using data to facilitate decision-making, identify obstacles and improve services.
Honorable Board of Supervisors and Monterey County residents:

On behalf of the Monterey County Children’s Council, I am pleased to present our Annual Report, which shows trends of the past 4 to 5 years, and provides updates for the time period 2007-2008.

It has been a rewarding experience to serve as Chair of the Children’s Council. Community leaders have long recognized that the future of our communities relies on the importance placed on the next generations, and that healthy, strong and thriving children represent the best insurance today for a more solid and positive future tomorrow. The Children’s Council offers focused, multi-disciplined and integrated leadership to promote policies centered on children and youth ages birth to eighteen.

This annual report is our effort to document and share with the community the Council’s areas of responsibility, and present data with trends depicting the level of children’s well-being in Monterey County as compared to the overall state of California. We hope that the information included in this report will be of interest and value to policy makers, organizations, and the community-at-large in making informed decisions related to the safe, healthy and successful development of children in our county.

Ongoing Children’s Council projects include the implementation of the Children’s Behavioral Health System of Care, La Familia Sana, and the planning process for the Monterey County’s Child Welfare System Improvement Planning. The Children Council’s major area of focus for 2007-08 was the issue of high school completion rates in the County.

Of particular note and significance in 2008 was the effort directed at finding ways to reduce violence and the influence of the culture of violence, especially in the East Salinas communities. In response to a rising rate of homicide and gun violence among young males, related to gang activity, the Council’s Violence Prevention subcommittee began meeting on a bi-weekly basis in March 2008. It continued at this pace throughout 2008 and transitioned in January 2009 into a County-wide coalition, the Community Alliance for Safety and Peace (CASP), encompassing City and County leaders and service providers. The protection of children and preservation of their safety and well being is significantly compromised by the level of violence in their neighborhoods. Thus, the Community Alliance for Safety and Peace has embraced the mission of convening a multidisciplinary, community-oriented, policy team to restore and sustain peace in Salinas and throughout the County. Successes of this effort will serve the major population area of Salinas, and will be extended throughout the County’s communities.

The Children’s Council values ideas and input from community members to continue the dialogue regarding the needs of children in our county. We invite those interested to attend the Council meetings and work with us in a collaborative manner. Together, we can ensure that our children live in safe, nurturing homes and communities and that they realize their full potential and succeed in life.

Sincerely,

Manuel Real, Chair

July, 2009
The Annual Report was created to help the community understand the needs of children in Monterey County and to help build community commitment to meet those needs. It is a "snapshot" showing the status of children in Monterey County along a variety of indicators, with comparisons to how children are doing in the entire State of California. The Annual Report is intended to help community members who work in a number of roles, make informed decisions with regard to public policy, volunteer efforts and support for non-profit organizations.

The Annual Report has four goals:

- To serve as a benchmark to measure how children are faring over time;
- To serve as a catalyst to mobilize community-wide efforts to address the most critical challenges to children’s success;
- To recognize areas in which services and initiatives have been successful in improving children’s quality of life in order to maintain support for these efforts;
- To present information on multiple indicators in a simple arrangement and in a useful format and location.

**Methodology**

This Annual Report serves as a benchmark to measure the relative success of efforts to improve conditions for all children in Monterey County. It is based exclusively on secondary data sources. A list of indicators was created based on previous versions of the Annual Report and reports of other county organizations, such as the Monterey County Health Department. The quality of the data was assessed and a working committee came to consensus on the pertinence of each measure for the Annual report. Twenty-nine indicators were selected for this report, and most graphs reflect data from 2002-2007. Data were derived from a variety of sources as indicated at the bottom of each chart. The data are presented in conceptual domains of factors affecting child health and well being.

**Acknowledgements:**

**Monterey County Health Department, Epidemiology Unit:**
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- Sam Trevino

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- Anne Yallalee Wheelis

**Monterey County District Attorney**
- Gary Thelander

Additional copies of this report and user feedback form may be downloaded from:
- [http://www.unitedwaymcca.org](http://www.unitedwaymcca.org)
- [http://www.mcdises.co.monterey.ca.us/](http://www.mcdises.co.monterey.ca.us/)

Please direct questions or comments regarding this report to:

**Charlotte Noyes**, Children’s Council Coordinator, United Way Monterey County, Monterey, CA 93940
(831) 372-8026 x104
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Population by Race/Ethnicity
Monterey County 0-17 Year Olds, 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>86,745</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>26,237</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>5,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>3,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/Multi</td>
<td>4,304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>126,363</strong></td>
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Population Estimates and Percent Change
Monterey County and California, All Ages, 2000 and 2008

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>2000 Population (n)</th>
<th>2008 Population (n)</th>
<th>Percent Change (%)</th>
<th>Percent Population 0-17(%)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carmel-by-the-Sea</td>
<td>4,081</td>
<td>4,049</td>
<td>-0.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gonzales</td>
<td>7,564</td>
<td>8,803</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>37.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greenfield</td>
<td>12,648</td>
<td>17,316</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>38.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>King City</td>
<td>11,204</td>
<td>11,852</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>35.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marina</td>
<td>18,925</td>
<td>19,171</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>21.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monterey &amp; Del Rey Oaks</td>
<td>31,346</td>
<td>30,949</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>16.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pacific Grove</td>
<td>15,522</td>
<td>15,472</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>17.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salinas</td>
<td>142,685</td>
<td>150,898</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seaside &amp; Sand City</td>
<td>33,358</td>
<td>34,492</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>30.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soledad*</td>
<td>23,015</td>
<td>27,905</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>101,414</td>
<td>107,642</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Monterey County Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>401,762</strong></td>
<td><strong>428,549</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>28.4</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>California Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>33,873,086</strong></td>
<td><strong>38,049,462</strong></td>
<td><strong>12.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>27.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Includes Salinas Valley State Prison inmate population of approximately 4000 in each time period.

This indicator represents the percentage of public school students that is English Learners. English Learner students are those students for whom there is a report of a primary language other than English on the state-approved Home Language Survey and who, on the basis of the state-approved assessment procedures, have been determined to lack the English language skills of listening, comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing necessary to succeed in the school's regular instructional programs.

Children need sufficient English proficiency to succeed in their full academic program and to continue their studies in higher education. English proficiency is highly correlated with positive outcomes such as greater economic and employment opportunities and accessing important benefits or services.

In Monterey County, the percentage of public school students classified as English Learners has remained higher than the state average and over the past 5 years the difference has remained relatively constant. The percentage of English Learners enrolled in public schools has fluctuated slightly and more noticeably in Monterey County since 2006, than it has for the state in the same time period.

Source: California Department of Education, 2002-2008
http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/
This indicator is the percentage of women who gave birth in a given year who have completed fewer than 12 years of education. This indicator was chosen because it is the most reliably reported across years by the California Department of Public Health, Center for Health Statistics.

Maternal education level is closely tied to future academic achievement, health and economic status for the mother and her children.

Births to Mothers with Less than 12 years of Education
Monterey County and California Women, 1999-2007


A large proportion of Monterey County mothers have less than a 12th grade education. The percentages of women giving birth who have a high school education did not increase or decrease from 2002 to 2007; and indeed, the gap between the County figures and those of the State have remained relatively constant – the County at about 48% and the State at about 29%. However, this high level of Monterey County mothers and the differential from the state’s rates is a primary focus for concern, as we continue to work to raise the literacy levels and educational achievement of girls and mothers.

Note: These are live births to residents of California and Monterey County, regardless of the location where the birth took place.

Note: In last year’s Annual Report the percentage of women in Monterey County in 2006 with less than a 12th grade education was reported as 51%. Upon further examination, it was found that the percentage was actually 47.2%, as graphed above. The inaccurate percentage in last year’s report was due to a change in categories used to report information from birth certificates, which was instituted in 2006. The percentage of 47.2% was computed through application of a ratio from the state data from 2005.
This indicator is the rate of births to teens – number of live births per 1,000 live births among the 15 to 17 year old female population.

Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school, more likely to live in poverty, and may have more difficulty fulfilling their roles as parents. Infants born to teens are more likely to have been born prematurely, have low birth weight, and experience higher infant death rates. Infants born to teenage mothers are also more likely to experience poor academic and behavioral outcomes in later life than infants born to older mothers.

**Teen Fertility Rate**

*Monterey County and California 15-17 Year Old Women, 1999-2007*

While there was a steady decrease in the state rate of 15-17 year old females giving birth from 1999 to 2007, (from 28 per 1,000 to 19.9 per 1,000), rates in Monterey County decreased only slightly. The Monterey County rate for births to teens aged 15 to 17 from 2001 through 2007 was consistently higher than that of California, and is at a level that warrants continued attention (32.7 per 1,000).

Children living below the poverty level are those under the age of 18 who, in the past twelve months, lived in households with incomes below the 2007 Federal Poverty Guideline. Childhood poverty has immediate and lasting negative effects. Children living below the Federal poverty level are more likely to have difficulty in school, become teen parents, and experience higher rates of unemployment and low-income earnings in adulthood.

Monterey County’s percentages from 2002 through 2007 of children under 18 living at or below the Federal poverty level have fluctuated from 21.4% in 2004 to a low of 14.6% in 2006, with the average over these years being 17.9%. In contrast, the State’s percentages have remained relatively even (18.3% in 2002, 18.7% in 2004 and 18% in 2007). In 2007 the number of children living below poverty level in Monterey County was 18,318.

It is important to note that the definition of poverty level used here has come under scrutiny and may indeed measure only those living under extremely dire financial conditions. Perhaps a more useful indicator of poverty may be the rate of families, especially in Salinas, who live between 100% and 200% of the poverty level. (17.2% for the State, 19.4% for the County, and 23.3% for Salinas in 2007). There is also a considerable negative contrast between the percent of children living below Federal Poverty Level in Salinas as a whole and those in the Alisal community of Salinas (East), home to 22,768 individuals under 18(39%) and to over 13,000 individuals (22%) living below the Federal Poverty level.

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1 This guideline is an annual income of $16,453 or less for a family of three, with one child less than age 18.
2 The Federal poverty level, developed in 1963, is based on a study conducted in 1955 which determined that a family of three or more spent about one-third of after-tax income on food and on a 1963 calculation of an economy food budget. Since 1963, the Federal poverty level has been adjusted using the consumer price index. A report by the California Budget Project (Making Ends Meet: How Much Does it Cost to Raise a Family in California) estimates that a single parent family will only spend 10.1% of its income on food. This report sheds light on the definition of poverty and use of this indicator.
3 U.S. Census Bureau, http://factfinder.census.gov
The federal welfare reform legislation, Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, known in California as CalWORKs, provides financial assistance to needy children and families in Monterey County. This indicator reports the average annual caseload of children under the age of 18 receiving financial assistance through CalWORKs.

The CalWORKS program has multiple goals, including reduced welfare dependency, increased self-sufficiency, and decreased non-marital childbearing. It seeks to improve child and family well-being by strengthening work first requirements and increasing support services for families engaged in work activities.

Despite the apparent slight increase between 2003 and 2004 for Monterey County, the number of children served by CalWORKS financial assistance mirrors the state’s gradual decrease. Fluctuations in these numbers may be related to the dynamics of the CalWORKs population which has a wide range of social and economic characteristics, and the ups and downs in the state and local economy. It will be important to follow this indicator in 2008-2009, tracking the concomitant economic downturn and its impact on unemployment rates.

Source: California Department of Social Services, Research and Development Division, Data Systems and Survey Design Bureau. 2002-2008 http://www.cdss.ca.gov/research/CA237CW-Ca_389.htm
The Free or Reduced Price Meal Program is a federal program administered by the US Department of Agriculture. Program enrollment is by application and is based on the income of the child's parent or guardian. It is important to distinguish “enrolled” from “eligible” and “participating.” The distinctions are as follows:

**Eligible** = Family meets the economic criteria for participation (Monterey County Office of Education) does not collect eligibility data

**Enrolled** = Student’s family has met eligibility criteria and student is “signed up” to participate

**Participation** = Student is actually receiving free or reduced price meals

### Percentage of Students Enrolled in Free or Reduced Price Meal Program

**Monterey County and California 5-17 Year Olds, 2004-2005 through 2007-2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Monterey County</th>
<th>California</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>60.9</td>
<td>62.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>65.0</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Enrollment in the Free or Reduced Price Meal Program is one indicator of family income status and financial stability. It is also an informal indicator of nutritional risk of children who may not receive adequate meals when schools are not in session. The percentage of children receiving reduced cost meals in Monterey County is consistently higher than the average for California.
Early prenatal care has been established as an indicator of quality of life and health in populations. This report presents this indicator as the percentage of pregnant women who receive prenatal screening and treatment for medical conditions and identification of behavioral risk factors in the first three months of pregnancy.

Studies have shown that earlier prenatal care is associated with better health and developmental outcomes for newborns as well as fewer complications for mothers.

**Percentage of Women Entering Prenatal Care in the First Trimester**  
Monterey County and California, All Ages, 1999-2007

![Graph showing percentage of women entering prenatal care in the first trimester from 1999 to 2008 for Monterey County and California.](image)


Seventy-five percent 75% of Monterey County mothers in 2008 entered into prenatal care during their first trimester. This represents a statistically significant decrease compared to 2004, when 83% of women entered prenatal care in the first trimester. The percentage of Monterey County women who entered prenatal care in the first trimester since 1999 has been consistently lower than the percentage statewide. This may suggest the need for greater examination of factors such as education and outreach, health insurance, and other health care access issues that uniquely affect our County’s demographic composition.
The percentage of live births in Monterey County that are funded by MediCal (California’s publicly funded insurance program) provides another indication of financial status of families.

This indicator reflects factors such as lack of access to private insurance and low income levels, which affect a child’s health and access to preventive medicine and care later in life. A higher percentage of Medi-Cal births indicates more people relying upon government assistance, as they do not have other forms of more comprehensive insurance.

The percentage of births funded by MediCal in Monterey County increased since 1999; for California it has increased since 2000. The percentage of MediCal funded births from 1999-2007 in Monterey County has been consistently between 8% and 10% higher than the state, which points to continued need for attention to access to health care and effects of economic factors on families in Monterey County.

Note: These data represent the most current statistics available at the time of publication. Data for California for 2006 and 2007 were not available.
The percentage of infants born in a given year weighing less than 2,500 grams (about 5.5 lbs.) provides an indicator of vulnerability of newborns and their families in a population.

Children born with low birth weights are more prone to infant death as well as developmental delays and certain chronic diseases. Causes of low birth weight babies include premature birth, smoking and maternal drug use.

![Percentage of Infants with Low Birth Weight (<5.5 lbs)](chart)

**Monterey County and California, 1999-2007**

In general, the percentage of low birth weight babies compared to all births in Monterey County has been consistently lower (about 2 percentage points) than that of California from 2002 through 2007. The California percentage averaged 6.5 %, while the average over these years for Monterey County was 4.9%.

Infant Mortality is reported as the number of deaths of infants from birth to one year per 1,000 live births.

Infant mortality rate is an indicator of the quality of and accessibility to health care. The most common causes of infant mortality are gestational disorders, low birth weights, congenital malformations and sudden infant death syndrome.

Rate of Infant Deaths
Monterey County and California, Ages Birth to 1 year, 2001-2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Monterey County</th>
<th>California</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>5.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
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<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, 2004-2007
http://www.co.monterey.ca.us/health/Publications/

The infant mortality rate in Monterey County appears to have declined from 2001 to 2007. For the same period, California experienced relatively stable infant mortality rates. From 2004 to 2007 the infant mortality rate in Monterey County fell below that of the state.

Note: Infant death rates are based on relatively small numbers, making year to year comparisons potentially unreliable. Care should be taken in drawing inferences from these data.
This indicator is the percentage of students admitted to kindergarten who had received all required immunizations (4+ DTP, 3+ Polio, 2+ MMR, 3+ Hep B, and 1+ varicella). These percents are based on large samples of kindergartens reporting each year to the state.

Large portions of the population being vaccinated help prevent outbreaks of preventable diseases, thus avoiding serious community-wide health crises.

Source: California Department of Health Services, Immunization Branch, 2006 Kindergarten Assessment, 2002-2006 http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ps/dcdc/izgroup

Monterey County has had a consistently higher percentage of kindergartners who have received all their immunizations than is reported for California, although the difference is slight. These percentages were all above 90% for both the County and the state from 2002 to 2008.
This indicator measures the percentage of children and youth ages 12 to 17 with Body Mass Index (BMI) levels above the 95th percentile of the population. The 95th percentile BMI is standardized using national growth charts for age and sex for children and adolescents.

There is much national concern about the increasing prevalence of obesity in children and adolescents. Overweight and obesity acquired during childhood or adolescence may persist into adulthood and increase the risk for some chronic diseases later in life. Teenaged boys lose some fat accumulated before puberty during adolescence, but fat deposition continues in girls. Overweight adolescents have a 70% chance of becoming overweight or obese adults. Many behavioral and environmental factors contribute to increasing overweight conditions in children and youth, including increased consumption of foods higher in calories, fats, and sugars, and reduced physical activity.

![Graph showing the percentage of overweight teens in Monterey County and California 12-17 year olds, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007.](http://www.chis.ucla.edu)

**Source:** California Health Interview Survey, 2008.

The percentages of Monterey County teens with overweight conditions appeared fairly steady from 2001 through 2007. Monterey County had higher percentages of overweight teens compared to the state for the three time points, although this should be interpreted with caution due to instability of the data for Monterey County. In 2007, the percentage for Monterey County was 8 points higher than that of the state (21% of teens compared to 13%).

Notes: 1) Data represent body mass indices in the highest 95 percentile with respect to age and gender. 2) Monterey County data for 2003, 2005 and 2007 are statistically unstable and should be interpreted with caution.
The indicator presented shows rate of death due to all causes per 100,000 population for individuals aged 0 to 14 years for Monterey County and the State of California.

Most of the child and youth deaths in this age range are due to preventable causes that are unintentional, such as motor vehicle-related deaths. Unintentional injury death rates vary widely among different groups in the population, and are strongly related to the effects of socioeconomic status. At highest risk of unintentional injury death are children (playground accidents, auto accidents, poisoning, drowning, and abuse) and adolescents and young adults (auto accidents and traumatic brain injury).

These data do not reflect the injury mortality in later adolescence (over 14), including causes stemming from homicide and suicide.

In general, the rates for Monterey County and California for deaths of children 0 to 14 years have declined since 1995, with more variability and data instability in the County rates, due to small numbers of cases. As most mortality is due to preventable causes, even these small numbers should be part of a comprehensive and preventative approach to child health and well being in the County.

State law requires school districts to administer physical fitness tests, designated by the state Board of Education, to all 5th, 7th, and 9th graders annually. The test assesses six major fitness areas: aerobic capacity (cardiovascular endurance), body composition (percentage of body fat), abdominal strength and endurance, trunk strength and flexibility, upper body strength and endurance, and overall flexibility. A number of test options are provided so that most students can participate.

Physical fitness is an indicator of good health, and studies have shown it can lead to higher academic achievement. Recent research correlates good aerobic capacity with a reduction in many health problems.

**Percentage of Children Meeting at Least Five of Six Fitness Criteria**

Monterey County and California Students, 2004-2005 through 2007-2008

In 2004-2005, the percentages for Monterey County of children meeting five out of six physical fitness criteria were more similar to the state’s percentages than in 2007-2008. To provide a point of reference, the percentage for California 9th graders was labeled. It is encouraging to note that the County percent for 5th graders reached nearly 50% in 2007-2008.

This indicator is the rate of reported chlamydia cases per 100,000 population for 0-17 year olds from 1998 to 2007, presented with a second graph depicting rates from 2003 to 2007 for chlamydia for all ages for both Monterey County and California. A related Healthy People 2010 objective is for chlamydia infections to occur in no more than 3% of persons aged 15 to 24 who utilize family planning or sexually transmitted disease clinics. It is an overall indicator of a population’s reproductive and general health status. Chlamydia is known as a "silent" disease because about three quarters of infected women and about half of infected men have no symptoms, thus underscoring the need for increased screening among young, sexually active women.

**Rate of Reported Chlamydia Cases 0-17 year olds, Monterey County**

![Rate of Reported Chlamydia Cases 0-17 year olds, Monterey County](image)

**Rate of Reported Chlamydia Cases All Ages Monterey County and California**

![Rate of Reported Chlamydia Cases All Ages Monterey County and California](image)


In 2007, for Monterey County, the rate of Chlamydia was the lowest in the ten-year span for 0-17 year olds. Across all ages, the rate of the disease declined in Monterey County in 2007, while it was higher at the state level.
The indicator of child abuse and neglect was determined to be the rate of substantiated reports based on a referral made due to allegations of child abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of children 18 year of age or less per 1,000 children.

This indicator informs the prevalence of child abuse. State law requires several groups of professionals, including teachers, nurses, social workers, law enforcement officers and child care providers to report suspected cases of child abuse. Others reporting include parents, neighbors, friends and anonymous persons.

Source: Child Welfare Services Reports for California. UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research, 2009

In 2007, the County’s rate of referrals appeared to be declining; the percent of substantiated referrals was closer to the state percentage than in any previous year reported.
The number of reported missing children who have left home without the knowledge or permission of their parents or guardians, relative to the population, may indicate a serious need in a population due to a lack of resiliency of the family, individual and community.

According to the California Department of Justice, runaway children constitute the largest component of children reported missing to authorities. Research suggest that 75% of runaway and homeless youth have dropped out or will drop out of school and 32% have attempted suicide at some point in their lives. Roughly 26% of runaway and homeless youth stay in unsupervised and possibly unsafe places for one or more nights and 12% spend at least one night outside, in a park, on the street, under a bridge or overhang, etc.

![Number of Runaway Children in Monterey County](chart_monterey.png)

![Number of Runaway Children in California](chart_california.png)


The number of reported missing children in Monterey County has fluctuated over the 7-year span, with an apparent increase from 2003 to 2006. The state of California showed an increase in the number of reported missing children from 2002 to 2006. In 2008, the rate of runaway children per 1000 population (aged 5 to 19) was 13.5 for the County and 13.8 for the state, showing one area where the rate of the state is about the same as Monterey County.
This indicator is the rate of children placed in welfare supervised care per 1,000 children during the month of July, including shelter, court-specified, kin, guardian, or other placement situation.

Removal of children from their families and placement in foster care is a difficult intervention for children. It is used when risk to children is extreme. Best practice, and both federal and state laws discourage the removal of children from their homes unless absolutely necessary to ensure the child’s safety. The placement of children in out-of-home care is an indicator of family problems that are so difficult, that a child cannot remain safe with his or her family. Child abuse and neglect are serious problems that cross socioeconomic boundaries and have profound effects on impacted children.

The rate of Monterey County children in foster care decreased in 2006 after several years of continued increase. The rate of children in care in Monterey County was about 2/3 that of the state in 2007. Rates of children in foster care have fluctuated somewhat from 2002 to 2007 in Monterey County. However, Monterey County’s low rate is consistent with the Department of Social and Employment Services’ commitment to prevention and early intervention as exhibited by investment in programs like Family Ties (which supports relatives who are caring for children in need) and Pathways to Safety (which supports families who have been reported to child protective services, but where foster care is not warranted).

Note: Graph is based on an unduplicated count of entries during time period.
Tracking the number of the students enrolled in each public school and district on a given day in October for grades K-12 provides information on the school age population of a community. This is different from average daily attendance (ADA), which is the average daily number of students who attended school over the course of the year. The number of pupils enrolled in the school is usually larger than the ADA due to transience, dropouts and illnesses. Enrollment and ADA are both used for funding purposes. A change in the enrollment in public schools is an indicator of changes in the school age population in the county.

Source: California Department of Education, 2002-2008
http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/

After a period of increasing enrollment, the number of students in public schools in Monterey County declined by more than 5.0% from 2003-04 to 2007-08. According to the Monterey County Office of Education, declining public school enrollment was followed by decreases in the state and federal funding that is based on school enrollment in addition to other budget reductions.
The percent of public schools showing school wide year-to-year growth on the state Academic Performance Index (API) provides an indicator of the success of the schools in meeting student educational needs. The calculation is based on individual student scores from the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program and the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) combined into a single number to represent the performance of a school. Schools that fall short of the target are required to meet annual growth targets. Schools that already meet or exceed the statewide target are expected to make a one point growth each year thereafter.

The Academic Performance Index is the centerpiece of the statewide accountability system in California public education. If a school fails to meet its annual growth target, it may be identified for High Priority/Intervention Programs. The purpose of the API is to measure success and initiate growth in school and district performance in the state. With the annual API release, a growth target is established for each school and district, setting a yearly goal for improvement. API is growth within each school and district; the focus is to meet or exceed established annual growth targets.
Overall, in the last two years, Monterey County schools remained at about the same percentage of schools at or above the Performance Target of 800. This compares to a statewide increase of 5% for the same time period.

All numerically significant subgroups at a school must meet their growth targets for a school to meet its API growth target. These subgroups include ethnic subgroups, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, English learners, and students with disabilities. The percentage of schools in Monterey County meeting all their API growth targets increased by 4% from 2005 to 2008, and is higher than the statewide percentage. In Monterey County, the percentage of middle and high schools meeting all API growth targets exceeds the statewide percentages by 10% each.

County and state data do not include schools using the Alternative Schools Accountability Model (such as continuation schools, special education schools, or small schools with fewer than 100 valid test scores).
The percent of total enrollment in Special Education for ages 5 to 22 with the following disabilities provides an indicator of level of need of children with special needs:

- Mental Retardation
- Deaf
- Specific Learning Disability
- Speech or Language Impairment
- Hard of Hearing
- Emotional Disturbance
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Visual Impairment
- Orthopedic Impairment
- Other Health Impairment
- Deaf-Blindness
- Multiple Disability
- Autism

Federal law requires that all children with disabilities be provided a free and appropriate education according to an Individual Education Plan (IEP) from infancy until 21 years of age or until 22 years of age depending on certain circumstances. Students with special needs require support from local schools that goes beyond the classroom. Programs to identify and meet the educational needs of children with emotional, learning, or physical disabilities require partnerships between schools, community health care providers, institutions, and organizations that support the needs of students and their families.

The rate of children enrolled in special education has fluctuated slightly over the period from 2002 to 2008 in both Monterey County and the state of California; however, Monterey County shows a slightly lower percentage of children identified than the state. (9.5% in 2007-08 compared to 10.5% for the state).

Source: California Department of Education, 2002-2008
http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/
Tests in English/Language Arts and Mathematics in grades 2-11 are based on California's academic content standards. There are five levels of achievement in each grade level. This is the core of California's statewide Standardized Testing and Reporting Program (STAR).

These tests are a measure of student achievement in the grade level standards adopted by the California State Board of Education.

Although the values of the percentages have been slightly less each year, there is not evidence of a decrease in percent of students scoring at or above 50th percentile in math and reading for either the state or Monterey County since 2004. This is true for both reading and math scores, where the difference between the state percentage and that of Monterey County is around 8 percentage points in both areas.

Source: California Department of Education, 2004-2008
http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/
The percent of students passing English Language Arts and Mathematics on the California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) constitutes an indicator of educational success important to assessing the status of children in the county. Students begin taking the CAHSEE in the tenth grade, and repeat the exam until they pass both sections. Tenth graders’ CAHSEE scores are one indicator for Adequate Yearly Progress under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, and CAHSEE scores are typically 20% of the API for high schools.

Beginning with the class of 2006, students were required to pass this two-part test, linked to academic content standards in English/Language Arts and Mathematics, in order to receive a high school diploma.

Percentage of Monterey County Students Passing the English Language Arts Section on CAHSEE by Grade Level

![Bar chart showing percentages of Monterey County students passing the English Language Arts section on CAHSEE by grade level from 2003-2004 to 2007-2008.]

Percentage of California Students Passing the English Language Arts Section on CAHSEE by Grade Level

![Bar chart showing percentages of California students passing the English Language Arts section on CAHSEE by grade level from 2003-2004 to 2007-2008.]

Source: California Department of Education, 2003-2008
http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/
In both Monterey County and statewide, at least seven out of ten students pass the CAHSEE in grade ten in both areas of Language Arts and Mathematics.
The percentage of seniors graduating from public high school based on the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) definition is the number of graduates (year 4) divided by sum of the number of graduates (year 4) + grade 9 dropouts (year 1) + grade 10 dropouts (year 2) + grade 11 dropouts (year 3) + grade 12 dropouts (year 4). In this way, the denominator is seen as capturing the total number of students since ninth grade that had a likelihood of graduating by grade 12. However, the measure lacks precision; it does not count those who leave school between school years.

An education provides the foundation for young people to realize their fullest potential as productive, successful members of society. The graduation rate is a standard measure of basic academic competence. It is generally considered a minimum requirement for entry into the professional workforce and is an essential prerequisite for additional education and training. Greater economic opportunities and social well-being correlate strongly with educational level. Education is also a critical way that values, cultures, and shared experiences are transmitted.

The percent of Monterey County seniors graduating from high school fluctuated but remained higher than the statewide percentage. This chart does not reflect the percentage of the total population that has graduated from high school, but rather those students graduating from Monterey County high schools in specified years. This indicator is also weakened by the assumptions it makes about the stability of the high-school aged population. The Four Year Derived Drop Out Rate is perhaps a better indicator of high school success.

Source: California Department of Education, 2001-2008
http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/
The high school dropout rate is the number of students enrolled in grades 9-12 who drop out during the school year, reported as a percent of total student enrollment for those grades. These data do not include students who leave school between the school years. Such information is difficult to obtain with any accuracy since currently there is no standard method of computation.

Students who fail to complete high school are less likely to find and keep a good job, and are not prepared to compete successfully in today’s global economy.

![Percent of Total Student Enrollment Dropping out During School Year](chart)

**Source:** California Department of Education, 2001-2008
[http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/](http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/)

Although the school dropout rate has fluctuated in both California and Monterey County in the last five years, the dropout rate in Monterey County is consistently lower than the statewide rate, and in 2007-2008 appeared to be moving downward. In interpreting this indicator, it is important to consider the changes in drop out rate that may be affected by educational programming to keep youth engaged in their high school studies (e.g. alternative schooling, independent study, etc.)
The percentage of licensed childcare slots is the number of licensed childcare slots available divided by the number of children 0-13 with parents in the labor force. It does not include license-exempt or family and neighbor care scenarios.

Quality childcare is beneficial for a child’s social, emotional and cognitive development. Many working parents have a difficult time locating quality care.

**Percent of Licensed Child Care Slots per Child of Working Parents**


Ideally, the percent of slots per child of working parents available would be close to 100%. In the case of Monterey County, licensed care is available for about a quarter of the households with a parent in the labor force. Overall, the percentage of licensed childcare slots did not increase for Monterey County or California from 2000 to 2007. Although many factors affect these numbers, it is important that policy makers and program providers be aware of the apparent flattening of the percentage for Monterey County, in light of an observed increase for the state.

Source: California Child Care Portfolio, California Child Care Resource & Referral Network.  
This indicator reflects the annual cost for full-time licensed childcare in Monterey County.

Paying for quality childcare can be a large burden on a family, especially families living at 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (low income) or below.

The costs of licensed childcare in Monterey County have risen from 23% to 50% since 2000, depending on the type of care. Based on the total cost per year of the four types of care shown, there has been a significant increase in the cost of child care in Monterey County from 2000 to 2006. In all cases, annual costs for licensed childcare in Monterey County were higher than California.

Note: The data represented on the chart is what was available at the time of printing the report.
Rates of arrest are perhaps the most widely quoted indicator of crime. It is important to make the distinction between minor crimes (misdemeanors), and more severe crimes, (felonies) upon which a more stringent sentence is imposed. Misdemeanor arrests refer to the number of arrests of youth aged 10 to 17 for the less serious or less violent offenses, such as petty theft, vandalism, or trespassing. Felony arrests indicate the number of arrests of youth ages 10 to 17 for the most serious violent, property, drug and sex offenses including homicide, forcible rape, robbery, assault, and kidnapping.

It is also important to note that this definition is based on the number of arrests rather than the number of individual offenders, and that an arrest is not a conviction. A single youth may be arrested several times a year, so arrests do not necessarily match the actual number of juvenile offenders. More often than not, felony arrests exceed the actual number of juveniles charged with felony crimes.

Youth crime is an important factor in community safety. Additionally, youth who engage in criminal activities are exhibiting self-destructive behavior. Further, adults who are arrested for the most serious and violent crimes are more likely to have been youthful offenders than are adults who commit lesser crimes.

Arrests for violent crimes are an indicator of more severe dysfunction than any other type of arrest. The level of youth violence in society may be viewed as an indicator of young people’s ability to control their behavior, as well as the adequacy of socializing agents such as families, peers, schools, and other institutions to guide youth behavior to acceptable norms. Violence affects the quality of life of young people who experience, witness, or feel threatened by it. In addition to the direct physical harm suffered by young victims of serious violence, such violence can adversely affect victims’ mental health and development, and increase the likelihood that they themselves will commit acts of serious violence.

Source: California Department of Justice, Criminal 2009 http://ag.ca.gov/cjsc/datatabs.php
Juvenile misdemeanor arrests in Monterey County fluctuated from 2000 to 2007, with the highest rates occurring in 2001 and 2004.

Monterey County juvenile felony arrests appeared to decrease from 1999 to 2005, although this decline did not continue in the 2006-2007 data. The number of felony arrests in California declined from 2001 to 2004, and increased slightly in 2005. State misdemeanor arrests had been decreasing steadily until 2005 and appear to be leveling off in 2007; Monterey County has followed the same trend through fiscal year 2005-06, but saw an increase in fiscal year 2006-07. In 2007 the rate of juvenile felony arrest for Monterey County was 1609.4 per 100,000 of the teen population.

In interpreting arrest rate data, it is important to realize that there are numerous factors related to economic stress, population changes, changes in gang activity, and the implementation of suppression tactics, which directly affect the arrest rate stemming from both misdemeanor and felony episodes. Over the past 7 years, programs of the Monterey County Probation Department (JJCPA) aimed at youth 10-17 have shown considerable success in reducing recidivism related to new arrests in the 6 and 12 month periods following program inception, compared to a comparison group of youth who did not participate.

Note: Monterey County uses a fiscal year to determine the number of felony arrests for a given period, whereas the state of California uses a calendar year.

Source: California Department of Justice, Criminal 2009.  
http://ag.ca.gov/cjsc/datatabs.php
In November 2004, the Children’s Council formed a subcommittee to explore the needs and opportunities for housing of youth transitioning out of the probation and child welfare systems. The committee met during 2005 and developed a plan for creating housing alternatives. The Behavioral Health Division of the Health Department (BHD) included the recommendation to target youth exiting the youth center in the Mental Health Service Act (MHSA) plan submitted to the state in October 2005. A Request for Proposal for transition age youth housing was issued in January 2006 and a contract was awarded to Peacock Acres. Services began in January 2007, with one house continuing in operation and four youth being served. Additional houses funded by MHSA were planned but due to lack of referrals, expansion has not been needed. Meanwhile the Department of Social and Employment Services has let a contract also with Peacock Acres to start a THPP+ program for youth exiting the Foster Care System. THPP+ began in early 2008 and provides housing for 24 emancipated youth. Monterey County Behavioral Health has released an RFP for financing alternative housing for youth. CHISPA has submitted a bid for those services and is working with Behavioral Health in creating a Transition Age Youth house, groundbreaking is scheduled by end of 2009 with occupancy in 2010. Community Human Services, a community-based non-profit, has announced plans for a homeless youth housing program, location and start date have yet to be determined.

System of Care-La Familia Sana

Four years ago the Federal Government awarded the Behavioral Health Division a grant to improve the system of care for children's mental health; the grant is called La Familia Sana/The Healthy Families. The implementation of La Familia Sana is carried out with emphasis on system of care values, including:

- Honoring family and youth partnerships,
- Striving for cultural competence at all system of care levels,
- Collaborating with interagency partners,
- Providing seamless services, and
- Focusing on the individual needs of every child and family.

During 2006 La Familia, the Children’s System of Care implemented programs targeted at Transition Age Youth, defined as youth between the ages sixteen to twenty-five. The La Familia Sana mission is to empower these youth and families to create and sustain positive measurable change in their lives. This is implemented through an integrated, collaborative, inter-agency System of Care. La Familia Sana provides, in partnership with youth and their families, a comprehensive array of effective, individualized, community based services, which are youth-centered, family driven, strength based, culturally relevant, and evidence-based.

In 2007, progress has continued and we have seen an increase in inter-agency collaboration through combined programming and evaluation efforts. A second annual evaluation report was completed which captures extensive demographic and outcome information on individuals served in the System of Care. Also, a report was released regarding family and youth satisfaction & perceptions related to
Children’s Behavioral Health. These reports will be used to guide future program and quality improvement efforts. Additionally, concerted efforts to increase family and youth involvement at all levels in the System occurred and we have active participation by these individuals in program and planning efforts. Comprehensive programming is continuing to occur for Transition Age Youth (16-25) with a total of 78 new clients receiving services from 9/06-10/07. More families with children served in the System of Care are also receiving direct support as a result of this funding.

The last area of achievement has been related to outreach and social marketing efforts. In 2007, many community events were sponsored by the SOC in an effort to provide mental health resource information and reduce stigma related to mental health disorders. The goal is to provide information and resources that will function in a preventive manner so that individuals with mental health needs access services earlier. We estimate that we have reached approximately 500 individuals at these outreach events which have focused the Latino community.

**Child Welfare Redesign**

Family Children’s Services (FCS) and Probation have been successful at focused system improvement efforts as evidenced by the achievement of most of the System Improvement Plan goals. The section below highlights some of the core redesign activities, identifying areas of strength and achievement as well as areas for focused improvement for Family to Family, Differential Response, Wraparound, initiatives for Youth Transitioning to Adulthood; as well as new programs that further integrate consumer-driven programming.

**Family to Family (F2F)**

Family to Family is the core of redesign in Monterey County with a philosophical commitment to community partnerships, team decision-making, self-evaluation, and recruiting, retaining, and supporting resource families. Monterey County has had tremendous success with many of the strategies of F2F. Community stakeholders report that FCS is more approachable, transparent, and willing to work collaboratively. Team decision-making is starting to become business as usual and our lead community agencies are fully staffed and trained.

Family to Family tenets are consistent with the Department’s goals and philosophy that children are best raised by families in communities from which they come, and that strong communities produce strong families. There was agreement among stakeholders to work towards increasing community supports and resources to ensure that more children will be placed in their own neighborhoods, with their siblings, in a family setting that will produce stability and increase reunification with their birth families.

**Building Community Partnerships:** F2F local area coalition meetings serve to educate and inform FCS community partnerships about the need for resource families, as well as the needs of birth families, caregivers, children and youth at risk of abuse and neglect. Each coalition determines its area of interest and focus. The evolution of F2F in the area of community partnerships is also met with challenges. Apart from the principal F2F partners, CHS and Alisal Community Healthy Start, other community partners reported feeling they have less of an opportunity to engage in F2F.

**Team Decision Making (TDM):** Monterey County is currently holding TDM’s for initial entries, imminent risk, reunification and placement changes. The model for TDMs calls for inclusion of support persons identified by the parents – school personnel, church members, mentors, child care providers and others. A key to participation is the readiness training so that community partners
understand their role. The majority of FCS staff and partners reported that they value TDMs and have found them to be helpful in engaging with parents and finding alternatives to removing children from their home. Currently, use of TDM is resource-driven and not implemented fully. It has been noted that there is concern among FCS staff about the workload implications with TDMs. Additionally, some community partners reported feeling that they are not given sufficient opportunity to assist the families. While there is a consensus that TDMs are worthwhile and impactful, there are indications that the process needs improvement.

**Recruiting, Retaining and Supporting Resource Families:** Monterey County F2F seeks the active involvement of the community in the recruitment, retention, and support of resource families, through the efforts coordinated by the community liaisons. FCS has also formed a strong partnership with local media to design creative, thoughtful public service announcements that regularly run on local television and radio in both English and Spanish. Utilizing the slogan *Recruitment is Everyone’s Business*, FCS actively encourages a much broader involvement by staff, caregivers, and community members – this has included walking neighborhoods to provide information, local businesses distributing and posting information and presentations during work events. To the success of these efforts, the decline in the number of foster families that has been experienced throughout the State has been averted locally. However, our goal to increase the number of foster families has not occurred. There are clear barriers to foster parent recruitment related to the declining value of the foster family home payment and Monterey County has serious housing and financial barriers.

**Self-Evaluation:** FCS continues in its effort to develop meaningful outcome measures for our initiatives, while attempting to balance the demands of mandates for Federal and State measures. Efforts are focused on improving data integrity and the application of the quantitative information for continuous quality improvement.

Overall, staff, community partners, interagency partners, and foster parents believe in the values of F2F and are invested in its success. As with other findings in the Self-Assessment, there is a desire to work toward increased true collaboration, improved communication, and mutual accountability.

**CHERISH Receiving Center**

In 2004, FCS opened the CHERISH Receiving Center, a child-friendly, non-institutional center for children who have been removed from their home, or disrupted from a placement. The Receiving Center is a 23-hour child-friendly facility with comprehensive services including mental health and physical health screenings. The center gives FCS and Children’s Behavioral Health time to better assess children placed into protective custody, contact relatives and find the best possible placements in their home communities and with siblings. The Receiving Center provides children with clothing, healthy food, and interactive child activities while Foster parents and social workers agree that the Center has become an integral part of the overall child welfare service delivery system.

**Family Reunification Partnership (FRP)**

Family and Children’s Services and Children’s Behavioral Health (CBH) have teamed to create a brand-new unit called Family Reunification Partnership (FRP). The goals of FRP are the same as those of the Family Reunification (FR) unit, to strengthen families so that children can safely return home to their parents after they have been removed due to abuse or neglect. However, there are many things that make FRP unique. Every FRP family is assigned a team which consists of a social worker from FCS, a therapist from CBH, and a Parent Partner from either CBH or Mentor Moms and Dads. Every FRP family will have monthly Family Team Meetings (FTMs), in which parents, foster parents, therapists, service providers, parent partners, social workers, and family members can participate. The
The purpose of these meetings is to assess how well the parents are participating in case plan activities, arrange for visitation, and assess how the children are doing in placement or at home.

**Differential Response: Pathways to Safety**

Differential Response, known as Pathways to Safety (P2S) in Monterey, is a three-path redesign of the Child Protective Services system. As the Department partners with communities to achieve early detection of abuse and neglect, the hope is that enough appropriate services can be provided to the child and family through front end intervention, which will enable the child to remain safely in the home with their family. In October 2006, the ACTION Council began capacity-building activities for both internal partners (DSES and CBH) and for community service providers. Overall, the implementation of P2S has been a success. The ACTION Council and community partners feel that FCS is very supportive of the initiative through funding and program development. Challenges that have emerged include: consistency across agencies, need for more training, and clearer definition of roles, responsibilities and shared decision making.

**MCSTART**

MCSTART (Monterey County Screening Team for Assessment, Referral, and Treatment) is a collaborative program of Door to Hope. Key partners in MCSTART are FCS and CBH. MCSTART offers identification, assessment, referral, and treatment of high risk infants who have been prenatally exposed to alcohol and other drugs. Services include extensive mental health screenings and assessment services, child development, and family functioning/parenting skills for substance-exposed children and to pregnant mothers who have used substances. Since the program began, there has been a waiting list for services.

**Mentor Moms/Dads**

Mentor Moms and Dads, a birth parent mentoring program, operates under the direction of Door to Hope. Mentor Moms and Dads is a program for parents who have lost custody of their children and have the court’s permission to attempt reunification. Mentors are assigned to parents to provide compassionate support and guidance; they are men or women who have at least two years recovery, have regained custody of their children, and are active in recovery programs. The Mentor Moms/Dads have played a critical role in child welfare redesign initiatives, participating in steering committees for DR, Family to Family, and have provided input on training and outreach improvements. The mentors participate in TDMs, provide trainings for staff and foster parents, and case reviews. The mentors did report some areas for improvement regarding family engagement prior to TDMs, utilizing mentors in Voluntary Family Maintenance cases to prevent entry, and general customer service issues.

**Initiatives and Programs Supporting Youth Successfully Transitioning to Adulthood**

**California Permanency for Youth Project (CPYP)**

FCS has continued its involvement in the CPYP and participates in the task force. Monterey County has incorporated permanence throughout its daily practice. Currently, all long-term court reports address permanency and permanent connections. Permanency is discussed at monthly case conferences with social work supervisors. In November, 2006 Monterey County implemented Permanency Conferences county-wide (previously it was done on a case-by-case basis). FCS works with community partners around permanence for youth and how they can be part of the effort; providing technical assistance and trainings as needed. In October, 2006 FCS completed a follow-up training for CASA volunteers, group home providers and mental health providers. While all new social workers are trained in concurrent planning and how case decisions impact permanency outcomes for youth; it is clear from staff surveys that additional staff outreach on CPYP would be valuable. Monterey County recently purchased a search engine tool to help locate permanent connections. It will be used to
facilitate stability and permanence for youth. Since Monterey County began participating in CPYP, in April 2004, the number of youth in Long Term Foster Care has dropped from 179 to 134 (23%).

**Independent Living Program**
Monterey County continued to see strong program growth in FY 2006. This year marks the third year of partnership with Hartnell Community College and the fourth with the Office of Employment Training, with a continued emphasis on improving and increasing foster youth participation. Through this partnership, ILP has an updated curriculum and provides youth with more hands-on experiences related to daily living skills. This program meets a minimum of 4 times per month. In March 2007, Monterey County ILP youth were included in a public forum co-sponsored by the Community Action Partnership, to discuss transitional services needs in our county.

**Young Adult Resource Collaborative**
Family and Children’s Services continued to be the lead agency in Young Adult Resource Collaborative (YARC), a public-private partnership of professionals who have an interest in service provision of youth ages 14 to 24. Currently, members of this group are partnering to develop leadership training in public speaking. CASA has taken on the development of a leadership council. Monterey County has been approved to increase the bed capacity for the THPP program from 6 to 12 beds. Our THPP provider, Peacock Acres, is also represented in this group. At this time Monterey County is completing its THP Plus program plan, including partners and youth in this planning process.

Of substantial concern is the primary placement rate of youth in group homes in Monterey County. At present, the County is almost double the state average for that placement type, with 14.6% in group homes as primary placement. Additionally, almost all probation-supervised foster care placements are in group homes that are out of county. Probation staff and consumers expressed a desire for more placement options in Monterey County, as well as placements that were less restrictive, such as treatment foster care, FFA placement, or foster family placement.

Many of the local youth who have historically been ordered to the Department of Juvenile Justice will not meet the new, more stringent requirements for commitment. This means that Monterey County will need to have local placement options for youth offenders, most likely taking the place of youth in Monterey County Youth Center, who may now be sent to high-level group homes. This domino effect could potentially strain the local placement system and local funding.

Increasing services and supports for youth as they transition to adulthood is a local priority. Youth reported a desire for increased access to employment services and educational opportunities.

**Wraparound**
FCS, CBH, and the Probation Department have been working with community partners to provide families with Wraparound services for several years. Wraparound services are family-centered, community-oriented, culturally sensitive, strength-based, and individualized. These services help provide an alternative to sending children to, or keeping them in, high level group home placements. The ultimate goal of Wraparound is to keep children with their birth families, relative caretakers, or in foster families, by providing intensive, comprehensive, integrated and creative treatment, intervention and support services. Wraparound is currently being provided to an average of 36 Monterey County youth in the child welfare and probation systems, as well as an average of 6 post-adoptive youth. There are two Monterey County Wraparound providers for foster and probation youth, Unity Care, Inc. and Aspira Foster and Family Services. Additionally, Monterey County has one of the only AAP Wraparound programs in California provided by the Kinship Center and Aspira. AAP Wraparound is
provided to adoptive families with children at risk of or currently placed in a group home or institution in an effort to maintain or return the child to his/her adoptive home.

**Area of Focus**

For planning purposes, the Children’s Council distinguishes between areas of responsibility and areas of focus. Under an area of focus, the Council would take action steps to meet a certain goal; under an area of responsibility the Council would act as the oversight body.

As above, the Council currently has three areas of responsibility: transitional housing options for youth exiting foster care and probation services, overseeing implementation of the Children’s Behavioral Health System of Care-La Familia Sana and overseeing Monterey County’s Child Welfare System Improvement Planning process. In November 2007, the Council decided to explore an area of focus that would address opportunities for prevention and early intervention. It was noted that any area of focus identified and pursued by the Council would need to be relevant to each Council member to ensure support within their own department and/or programs and ultimately contribute to the fulfillment of the goal(s) established.

The Subcommittee generated ideas centered on the following criteria: target 0-18 population; identify and achieve gap reduction; outcomes are measurable, achievable, and framed in a positive manner; area lacks resources; goals within the area can be actionable; and the Council can make a multi-year commitment. After reviewing several options, the Subcommittee decided to focus on improving high school graduation rates in the public high schools in Monterey County, which would positively impact several other indicators. During several meetings, the committee reviewed local, state, and national data on high school dropouts, heard about local school and community-based efforts to engage and encourage at risk students, and heard a presentation from Pinnacles High School in Soledad, a California Model Continuation High School. Because the methodology calculating high school graduation and dropout rates has changed, the baseline changed with the 2006-07 rates.

At the behest of the Executive Committee, in consideration of the urgent need to address the increasing violence in the county in a time of diminished and uncertain financial resources, the Area of Focus Subcommittee suspended its work in January 2009. Efforts to develop an informal group to study the topic will continue at the Monterey County Office of Education.
Francine Rodd reported that last year the commissioners decided to initiate a new focus area called “Early Learning Opportunity.” They are going out to the community working with service providers, agencies, holding several community dialogues and meetings to help determine exactly what an early learning opportunity is. This came about as a result of brain research that shows that the first five years of life are the most important of a child’s life. The Early Learning Opportunities Initiative has four phases; the community discovery phase is currently taking place. Under this phase, the assessment methods are: interviews with key stakeholders who can provide a broad view of Monterey County; group dialogues with service providers to learn about their services and the families they work with; group dialogues with parents to learn about their views and experiences on important topics; one-on-one dialogues with parents to learn about the views and experiences who may not generally access services; and written surveys with parents as another way to learn about their general opinions and experiences on several topics. The community discovery will end in August or September.

Then First 5 will begin the community creativity phase where they will be holding four summits in the four different regions of the county. The community commitment phase follows, where First 5 will write the strategic plan from October to January. The final phase is community implementation and that is when the funding process begins to identify specific providers that can implement the strategies that have been identified.

Francine and Silvina asked the Council for their input in the following areas:

- Why families are not accessing services
- Ways to better support early learning
- Agencies and what they are doing well
- Strategies to involve parents
- Strategies to involve schools
- Connecting parents to schools
- Primary challenges your agency faces

*The answers to the questions were placed on flip charts; they are available upon request.
Discussion on Run Away Youth Services and Prevention

Presenter(s): Robin McCrae, Executive Director, Community Human Services
and Chad Hammack, Program Director, Safe Place

Robin McCrae, Executive Director of Community Human Services, reported that the runaway and homeless youth programs are separately funded programs and operate out of the program called “Safe Place.” The program components are core services which are basic center programs funded by Health and Human Services and street outreach services also funded by Health and Human Services. Community Human Services is working on the third piece of funding to include a transitional living program. Once those three pieces are molded together, Monterey County will have an extremely comprehensive homeless youth program. Last year, Community Human Services saw 328 runaways or homeless youth and their family members. Their services range from street outreach where they give food vouchers, brown bag meals, hygiene products, referrals to medical care, clothing and overnight stays in one of their two crisis resolution homes and educational flyers on sexually transmitted diseases, sexual predators and violence. Counseling services are also available to youth. Community Human Services also has a 24-hour crisis line and coordinates with other programs to refer kids into mental health counseling or direct kids through the Super Kids or Super Teens program.

Chad Hammack, Program Director of Safe Place, reported that their counseling centers include Monterey and King City. There are four counselors; two are outreach workers and two in-clinic psychotherapists. The Department of Social and Employment Services and Behavioral Health refer kids to them for outpatient counseling; where they can place up to eight kids. Four beds are available at Safe Place and four other beds in the other two crisis homes. They are seeing a shift back in the trend of runaways, where they are not running away from situations at home but are running away to be adventurous. Currently, they are working on developing a transitional supportive program for older homeless youth (18-25 yrs.). Funding for that program would come from the Health and Human Services grant. The former Fort Ord was chosen as the location where this program would be housed as it is an 8-plex and a 3-plex that would provide 27 beds. The project was estimated to cost about 1.8 million dollars for construction. They raised $340,000 more than they needed. However when bids were solicited for the project, they fell $900,000 short of funding; thus the board decided to dissolve the project. The project is expected to come up again in the future but doing the development in phases. Robin distributed the Project Summary for the Safe Place: A Comprehensive Runaway and Homeless Youth Program. Help can be found by calling their 1-800 number located in the yellow pages and information is disseminated through presentations in schools.

Elliott Robinson stated that the marketing of the hotline is imperative for runaways and added that the hotline is posted on the Network of Care website. Bill Barr, Ph.D., stated that the truancy rate is attributed to the runaway factor. Nancy Kotowski, Ph.D., stated that students will be dis-enrolled when a student has been absent for 10 days and that attendance numbers could be used as a way to identify runaways. Judge Price stated that we could use this quorum to draw up creative legislation for runaways.
Transitional Housing Update

Presenter(s): Dr. Wayne Clark, Co-Chair of Transitional Housing Committee and Director of Behavioral Health, a Division of the Monterey County Health Department

Dr. Clark reported that the Committee has put out an RFP (Request for Proposal) for transitional housing and is now talking to Peacock Acres. The RFP will be going before the Board of Supervisors in September. The Committee is looking at additional funding possibilities (THPP and THPP Plus) for housing children 18 and over and is now working with the Monterey County Housing Authority for a possible site, bedding from United Way and at the Mental Health Services Act.

Avian Flu

Presenter(s): Dr. Hugh Stallworth, Health Officer, Monterey County Health Department

Dr. Hugh Stallworth, Health Officer for the Health Department stated that in 1961 avian flu was discovered in water birds in South Africa. In 1997 there were 16 cases of individuals who contracted the influenza in Hong Kong. Since 2003 there have been at least 245 cases of avian influenza, mostly located in Southeast Asia. Based on experience to date, it is possible that the avian flu could result in a pandemic with a 50% fatality rate. There have been at least 2-3 pandemic influenzas per century. During the 20th century, in 1918 there was the Spanish Flu, in 1957 there was the Asian Flu and in 1968 there was the Hong Kong Flu. The virus spreads through domestic birds (chickens and ducks) to humans. There are three ways that humans can contract the virus. Excrements/feces from the infected bird – when the feces desiccates (dries up) it aerosolizes into the air and individuals breathe in the virus. This is the most common way that this virus is spread from infected birds to people. Another way to contract the virus is through close contact with the mucus from a bird. The example of handlers in cock fighting clearing the breathing airways of the cock was presented. The third way is not eating uncooked poultry. Dr. Stallworth presented three ingredients for influenza to become pandemic. The first is identification of a new or novel virus in birds or animals. In 1961 this was satisfied in South Africa when the avian flu virus was first detected. The second one is that the virus becomes capable of causing disease in humans. This was met in 1997 with the outbreak in Hong Kong. The third is that there must be efficient human to human transmission. We do not have this third ingredient yet. The virus has not been efficiently passed from one human to another. There are two organizations that are taking the lead on disseminating information globally and nationwide. They are the World Health Organization and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. These organizations are keeping an eye on worldwide surveillance, the development of vaccines, stockpiling of antiviral medicines and strategies for prompt mobilization. For local preparation the California Department of Health Services and the Monterey County Department of Health are educating the public.

Update on Student Achievement in Monterey County Schools

Presenter(s): Dr. Adrienne Meckel, Director, Curriculum and Instruction, Monterey County Office of Education and Anne Yallalee Wheelis, M.P.A., Coordinator of Health and Prevention Programs, Monterey County Office of Education
Anne Wheelis distributed flyers on “A Summit for Educators on Pandemic Influenza” which will be held on September 20th at Sherwood Hall.

Adrienne Meckel, Ph.D. reported that in California academic standards are higher than in any other state where all students are expected to become advanced or proficient. In 2003 the schools were asked to develop plans based on the performance goals. The five goals are:

- All students will reach high standards, at a minimum, attaining proficiency or better in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014.
- All limited English proficient students will become proficient in English and reach high academic standards, at a minimum attaining proficiency or better in reading/language arts and mathematics.
- By June 30, 2006, all students will be taught by highly qualified teachers.
- All students will be educated in learning environments that are safe, drug free, and conducive to learning.
- All students will graduate from high school.

Title I monies are designated to improve the academic achievement of the disadvantaged. There are two systems to measure performance that are used: State and Federal. The 2006 results are as follows:

- English Language Arts Results (grades 2-11) – Increase over 2005 in the percentages of Monterey County students scoring proficient or advanced in English Language Arts for grades 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9. Increases ranged from one to fifteen percentage points.
- Mathematics Results (2-7) – Increase in the percentage of students scoring at or above proficient in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II. Five years of results show increases in every grade and subject specific mathematics except for Algebra II, which remained steady.
- History/Social Science Results (grades 8, 10 and 11) – Overall, there has been an increase of 6 percentage points in grade 8, 5 percentage points in grade 10, and a decrease of 1 percentage point in grade 11.
- Science Results (grades 5, 8, 10) – Increase in the number of students scoring at or above proficient with the exception of Chemistry and Earth Science, which declined slightly. Biology and Physics increased by six % points. On the new 8th grade Science test, 36% scored at or above proficient and on the new 10th science test, 27% scored at or above proficient.

**October 2007**

**Conferencia de Necesidades Especiales Fiesta Familiar de la Costa Central**

Presenter(s): Maria Lopez, Chair, Fiesta Familiar de la Costa Central Committee

Maria Lopez distributed a flyer with information on the Fiesta Familiar De La Costa Central conference. This is the third annual special education conference presented in Spanish to inform Spanish speaking parents and caregivers of children with special needs of resources and programs available. There will be various workshops on advocacy, health, parent’s rights, positive discipline, speech therapy, family stress and siblings and adolescent sexuality. Maria Lopez invited the Council and anyone else interested in attending the conference. The all-day conference will be on October 28th.
at Dr. Oscar Loya Elementary School. If there are any questions or would like more information, contact Maria Lopez.

Silver Star Gang Prevention and Intervention Program

Presenter(s): Robert Reyes, Probation Services Manager, Monterey County Probation Department

Robert Reyes, oversees the Silver Star Gang and Intervention Program. The program has been in existence a little over a year and is struggling with funding. At this time, the department is looking into resources for sustaining the program. Robert Reyes made a PowerPoint presentation that included the programs that Silver Star offers, program statistics, demographics of people being served, how the referral process works, collaborative agencies involved and the challenges the program faces without the funding required. During the last eight months, the referrals have doubled. Jeff Bryant suggested looking at local agencies such as United Way Monterey County and Community Foundation for future funding.

Family and Children Services Update

Presenter(s): Margaret Huffman, Program Manager, Christine Lerable, Program Manager and Anne Herendeen, Program Manager, Family and Children Services, Department of Social and Employment Services

Robert Taniguchi reported on a number of outcome indicators for Monterey County’s Child Welfare Program. There was an increase in the referral rates from the year 2000. There was also an increase in the rate of referrals that were substantiated since 2002. In 2004-2005 there were 7,964 total referrals. The response to unduplicated referrals is up 14%. First time entries into foster care remain low. There is a decline of recurrence of abuse in homes where children were not removed; currently Monterey County is at 4.9% and the state of California is at 12.3%. There is also a decline of recurrence of maltreatment; Monterey County is at 6.1%, and California is at 10.7%.

Since 2002, rates of placement into group homes have not changed and are still low in comparison to the rest of the state. Response rates for “immediate response” referrals are at 99% and the statewide average it’s 88%. Ten day responses are at 96% and the statewide is at 94%. Sixty-three percent of reunifications were successfully completed within 12 months in the first quarter of 2006. Eighty-nine percent of the kids in foster care experienced only one or two placements in their first year of out-of-home care.

Family and Children Services (FCS) is in the 3rd year of a System Improvement Plan and will be conducting a new self assessment this spring. They are also working collaboratively with Santa Cruz and San Benito for the Joint Quality Peer Review project in January.
Anne Herendeen, distributed Family to Family handouts. She stated that they are in their fourth year of the initiative. Family to Family is designed to keep children safe in their communities and in their families whenever possible. They do that through four primary strategies. The first is establishing community partnerships throughout Monterey County. Family to Family looks at the unique characteristics of each community, resources in the community, and the needs of children in the community. The second strategy is to recruit resource families within the community. This includes training and ongoing support to foster families. It also includes assisting families who can’t be foster families but want to support the children in other ways. The third strategy is Team Decision Making. This is a process of meeting with a team of stakeholders in the child’s life consisting of a school district representative, the parents, and Social Services staff and community resources who come together to decide about a child’s placement. There fourth and last strategy is self evaluation; looking at outcomes to assure best practices for children and families.

Margaret Huffman, stated that Differential Response is a strategy to provide prevention and early intervention services. FCS partners with community agencies to have those agencies work with families who have been referred to FCS where the risk is not great enough to meet the Welfare and Institution Section 300 criteria for a child protective services investigation. Differential Response was first piloted in Monterey County last spring. The pilot lasted 3 ½ months. The piloted worked with four different community agencies. Margaret distributed a sheet that explains how Differential Response works. FCS is now planning the next phase of implementation and is in the process of looking for new community partners. There is a capacity building and community development meeting on January 11th to discuss Differential Response and to draw in more community partners. On February 2nd there is a planning session which will be about allocation decisions related to Differential Response.

Christine Lerable, stated that there are 140 children in long term foster care. FCS believes in finding permanent connections for children in long term foster care before they emancipate at age 18. The goal is to help avoid some of the dismal outcomes that face foster youth who do not have adults to guide them. The California Permanency for Youth Project over the last 3 or 4 years has significantly changed the social work practice in Monterey County. It is now a priority to look for parents who have been out of a child’s life for a long time and to know their current situation. If these parents have overcome barriers, reunification will be reconsidered. FCS is also continuing to look at relatives and adoption as resources. Permanency conferences, which include looking for all possible connections for children before emancipation, are also being held regularly. Part of this process is utilizing internet search engines to find relatives. At the same time FCS is offering more wrap-around services for families who have reunited with their children. Group home providers have been trained to support FCS on this project. With regard to foster parent recruitment, FCS is utilizing marketing approaches and including a fun commercial that highlights Monterey County youth. They created a young adult resource collaborative which is an effort to gather all the advisory boards and steering committees into one community collaborative coordinating body; all focused on improving the lives of older foster youth. Members of the collaborative are from Office of Employment Training, Hartnell College, the Adoption Wraparound Program in Kinship Center, Foster Youth Services, Probation, CASA, Transitional Housing Providers, Behavioral Health, Group Home Providers, and the Independent Living Program of DSES.
Differential Response Update

Presenter(s): Ricki Mazzullo, Executive Director, Action Council

Ricki Mazzullo, Executive Director for the Action Council reported that the Action Council is the lead agency in the implementation of Differential Response. The Action Council, Department of Social and Employment Services along with other community partners were part of a one-year planning process that included getting feedback from the community by conducting focus groups and surveys and doing a short pilot to get information on the best way to implement Differential Response in our County.

The Department of Social and Employment Services receives about 5,000 unduplicated calls through the CPS hotline. About 1,600 of the calls are immediately assessed out, which means the case is closed and no further action is taken. A second set of calls numbers 3,200. In these particular calls there is an assessment done by the intake worker that further investigation/assessment is required. Then an emergency response worker will go out to the family and do a safety assessment; they have 10 days to complete this assessment. Of those 3,200 assessed calls, about 800 calls have some substantiation of abuse which resulted in about 200 children being removed from their families last year.

Differential Response looks at putting the emphasis on early prevention and intervention which involves a community based response to the needs of these families. The goal is to find the right mechanism to put in place such as providing case management and services to these families to ultimately keep kids safe and out of the child welfare system.

The mechanics of how Differential Response works is when a call comes in and intake worker determines whether it’s Path I or II. Path I means a community based response only. A referral will come to the Action Council and a Family Resource Specialist will be assigned to the family. The Family Resource Specialist will go to that family’s home and make an attempt to engage them in services. The Family Resource Specialist will work with that family up to 90 days. With Path II, both the Family Resource Specialist and the Social Worker go to the family’s home. Path III is the traditional process that families go through when abuse has been substantiated.

The Action Council and DSES are looking at how to implement both Path I and Path II. They are trying to find out the best way to engage families in the services available. The response received so far, is that families are more likely to go to services if services are in their neighborhoods, after business hours or weekends, and if the services are provided in a culturally sensitive manner. The Action Council is currently looking at other sources of funding and contracting with other agencies.

A steering committee has been formed and is composed of the following: a mentor mom, a former foster youth, social workers, and the family resource specialists. There is also a Department Capacity Building Group, an Evaluation Group and Training Group. A Community Meeting was held on February 2nd and focused on how to work together to keep children safe and in their homes. The application deadline is February 16th with an expected start date of April 1st.
California Healthy Kids Survey Monterey County Results

Presenter(s): Anne Yallalee Wheelis, M.P.A., Coordinator of Health and Prevention Programs, Monterey County Office of Education

Anne Wheelis reported that one of the measurement devices that MCOE uses is the California Healthy Kids Survey, which is a comprehensive and customizable self-reporting survey. The data is representative of Monterey County students in 5th, 7th, 9th and the 11th grade in a two year school cycle between 2004-2006. There are five major goals for school districts in the “No Child Left Behind Act.” One of the goals is to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for students. The modules that school districts are looking at are alcohol and other drug use, resilience, safety, tobacco, physical health, and sexual behavior. Custom modules if needed can be made available. The purpose of the survey is to highlight findings allowing schools and health agencies to check progress, continue or open dialogue with students around new topics/findings, continue or open dialogue with community agencies and pursue solutions to challenges.

System of Care Update

Presenter(s): Dana Edgull, Services Manager, Behavioral Health, a Division of the Monterey County Health Department

Dana Edgull, stated that the County received a federal grant in 2003 to expand and enhance the existing Children’s Behavioral Health System of Care. System of Care is a coordinated network of services and supports that work with youths and families on mental health issues. The goal is for service providers and families to come together at the earliest stages possible so that families will be connected to the necessary services and support. Dana stated that she wants to focus on Avanza, which is the transitional youth program. She distributed the Avanza Adventures Newsletter. Today there are 100 youth participating and there is a focus on vocational enhancement. Right now System of Care is also focusing on outcomes related to youth involvement and making sure that the youth and families are accessing services in their community. An area of accomplishment has been with the family partnership program. They are working very hard to develop a family advisory committee. May is Mental Health Awareness month and on March 29th they are hosting an event at the Maya Cinemas to promote the System of Care services and support.
Court Appointed Special Advocates of Monterey County

Presenter(s): Donna Hagins, Advocate Coordinator and Kylie Kelly, Advocate Case Supervisor

Handouts were distributed by Donna Haggis and Kylie Kelly. Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) was created in 1977 by a Seattle judge who came up with the idea of using trained community volunteers to speak out for the best interest of abused and neglected children in the court system. Today there are 50,000 volunteers that serve 225,000 children throughout the nation. There are over 900 local programs throughout the United States. CASA in Monterey County is celebrating 10 years of advocacy this year with 6 people on staff not including 1 volunteer Case Supervisor and 3 interns. Currently 78 active volunteers are serving 106 children in the Monterey County welfare system. There are 96 children who have been referred to CASA by the court and are awaiting an assignment of an advocate. Court Appointed Special Advocates are required to complete 30 hours of training and pass an extensive background check. They are also required to complete an additional 12 hours per year of continued education. The goals of CASA are to have 175 advocates by 2008, extend its efforts to South County, engage more men and bilingual people and focus on educational advocacy. The majority of the advocates live in the Monterey Peninsula. Currently, CASA is in the process of opening an office in San Benito County. The court appointment ends when the child emancipates or the case is closed unless the child remains in school beyond their 18th birthday.

Monterey County Screening Team for Assessment, Referrals and Treatment (MCSTART) Program

Presenter(s): Chris Shannon, Executive Director, Door to Hope

Agency brochures and power point notes were distributed. MCSTART is an acronym for Monterey County Screening Team for Assessment, Referrals and Treatment, which provides services to children who have been at risk for prenatal substance exposure. MCSTART is the lead agency within the collaboration between Door to Hope, DSES (FCS), Children’s Behavioral Health, Community Health/Public Health Nursing Division and the Parent Center at the Salinas Adult School. MCSTART was formed in 2003 and started delivering services in 2004; they are located on 130 Church Street. The primary job is screening, assessing and providing early intervention services for children who have been prenatally exposed and suffer developmental, social, emotional or non-behavioral disorders. Nationally, around 14% of all pregnancies are exposed to alcohol or other drugs annually. The children are most exposed to methamphetamine and alcohol. The most damaging is alcohol; Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) can cause physical, mental, behavioral and/or learning disabilities. There are lifelong implications for the child but are not inheritable if they themselves have children. Children with substance exposure can grow, improve and function well in life; early intervention helps ensure this outcome. Ninety percent of these children will have mental health problems. Other problems can be growth deficiencies and developmental delays. Chris also presented the facial distinctions of FASD born children compared to those that are not FASD born children. MCSTART has served 1,089 children since its inception and in 2006-2007, they have seen 410 children. They screen children under the age of 3 every 6 months and over the age of 3 annually. The two biggest areas of delays that they
have seen are social-emotional and communication delays. The Council expressed their appreciation for MCSTART as this type of program does not exist in all counties and states.

**Monterey County Childcare Planning Council Early Education Leadership Breakfast**

**Presenter(s): Kim Stemler, Consultant, Child Care Planning Council**

On April 20th at the California University Monterey Bay, the Monterey County Childcare Planning Council will have an Early Education Leadership breakfast that will engage community leaders and childcare professionals in discussing and learning more about how the decisions we make can benefit children. The Week of the Young Child is coming up April 22-28. Due to lack of time, Kim Stemler will continue her presentation at the May Council meeting.

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**Early Education and its Economic Impact**

**Presenter(s): Kim Stemler, Consultant, Child Care Planning Council**

Kim distributed the High Quality Childcare information sheet. The earliest brain development for children is in the first 5 years of their lives; thus quality child care and/or education during this period are critical. It is important to look at the economic impact of quality childcare from an investment perspective. Since most parents work, parents need childcare in order to work and businesses need reliable employees for their businesses to function well; therefore the economy is impacted by quality childcare. Quality childcare provides improved child development and gets children ready for school. There are about 90,000 children 0-13 in this County and approximately 40,000 children 0-5. The majority of these children have parents in the workforce and about 43,000 of these parents need child care; with only 11,000 child care spots, we have a shortage of child care. This means that we have licensed child care for about 27% of the children. Looking at the County demographics, 57% of births are Medi-Cal births and nearly half of the parents have completed less than the 12th grade. Parents also tend to be living in poverty, 69% are Hispanic and 40% of the total population speaks another language other than English. Research shows that children in poverty have less vocabulary, are less literate and don’t have the same math and social skills as their middle class peers and even worse, they never catch up to their peers. The median income for a family of 4 in 2007 is $62,000. Poverty threshold for the same size is around $21,000. Fair market rent is $1,000. Reality is if we took all the people and nobody had homes, only 15% of people living in the County would be able to afford a home. Salinas is in the top three of the least affordable cities to live in the county and in 2003, AMBAG stated that education, health and social services represented 17% of the economic force. The Economic Policy Institute states that investments in high quality early child development programs exceed cost effective ratios of 3 to 1. So every one dollar invested will yield three dollars in return. So if we provide 20% of the nation’s 3 and 4 year olds with high quality early child development, there will be substantial future pay offs for government and tax-payers.
Transition Housing Program Plus (THP+) for Emancipated Youth

Presenter(s): Virginia Pierce, Management Analyst, Family and Children’s Services, Department of Social and Employment Services

Virginia Pierce distributed folders containing information on the Transition Housing Program Plus. Robert Taniguchi reported that in 2002 the Homeless Census identified 315 youths who were homeless; ten percent of those youth were in foster care. The number of placements that youth resided at once out of their homes was the following: 36% spent in their last month in one place, 41% spent it in 5 different places, 17.8% spent their month in two different places and 16.2% in three different places. The cost of living in this county is challenging for the youth that are exiting out of the system. THP+ helps these youth find a place to live. THP has expanded their services to serve youth at ages 18-24 in providing services and housing support. In 2001, AB427 was introduced in our state. This legislation took away the 60% county match and it made it fiscally sound and feasible for the Department of Social and Employment Services (DSES) to do run the program. So now DSES can provide housing with no county share of cost. DSES has had a partnership with Behavioral Health to provide mental health services. There are two entities that DSES is also working with and they are called the Young Adult Resource Collaborative Group, which provides resources for youth aged 14-21 and Avanza from Behavioral Health. The youth have mentioned that they want a strong mentor and more positive adult role models to help them. Currently they are in the draft process of an RFP to start the collaboration with their resources. The John Burton Foundation has been helping with technical support. There are four key elements that have been decided on. They are: age appropriateness, distinction from foster care, freedom and emphasis on supportive services. The four models that have been described are scattered sites (permanent/transitional throughout the county), single sites (permanent/transitional - apartments), single home transitional (shared house with several other youth) and host family model (identified relative in a home).

First 5 Monterey County-Early Learning Opportunities & Kindergarten Readiness Assessment Findings

Presenter(s): Beth Reeves-Fortney, Senior Program Officer and David Dobrowski, Evaluation Officer, First 5 Monterey County

Beth Reeves-Fortney gave an update on Early Learning Opportunities (ELO). The Commissioners are choosing a focus to address the essential needs in Monterey County for quality early learning experiences. On April 30th, the Commissioners approved the new ELO funding strategy to invest over 13 million dollars over a four year period for programs and services to help strengthen quality early learning for children ages 0-5 and their families. An independent and community based review panel recommended funding for 19 organizations. This came as a result of a one year process of providing dialogue opportunities for the community to come together to shape the strategy and essential program characteristics. These program characteristics address the following: literacy, information and referral, health education, mental health support, child abuse prevention, services for children with autism and substance abuse exposure during pregnancy.

David Dobrowski distributed the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment report. He reported that a random sample was conducted throughout the county to find out the different family characteristics and early experiences that children have in preparation for school. The areas that were looked at were social and emotional well being, communication skills, approaches to learning, cognition and general knowledge. Parents were surveyed on what activities they were involved with their children before
entering kindergarten. Interestingly less than 50% of children were read to. When parents were asked where they got information for family and child services, most responses were from the WIC program and the Health clinics. Children who entered high API schools are more likely to have spent more time in center based daycare and children who entered into low API schools are more likely to have spent more time in home based daycare.

**Alisal High School Parent Advisory Committee**

**Presenter(s): Dan Burns, Principal, Alisal High School and Jose Puga, Parent and Member, Advisory Committee**

Dan Burns, Principal at Alisal High School reported that there is a newly formed Parent Advisory Committee. The school determined that a Parent Advisory Committee was needed to coordinate the various efforts taking place at the high school and increase communication amongst the committees, councils and associations. The Parent Advisory Committee’s role is to develop solutions by involving parents in a “solution based discussion” and to act as a clearinghouse for all activities at the high school. Safety, employee friendliness, and customer service were identified as the three most important areas that need to be addressed. The Committee speaks to parents of students about issues that arise and which problem solving techniques they can consider. Dan also explained that the School Site Council governs the non-general fund. Jose Puga, parent and member of the Parent Advisory Committee emphasized the importance of parental involvement in a child’s education. He also mentioned that it is imperative to keep parents informed of the different services that are available to families. Jose thanked the Council for coming to Alisal High School and requested for the Council keep families informed of services available to them.
Roster

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Manuel Real, Chief, Probation Department, Chair
Nancy Kotowski, Ph.D., Superintendent, Monterey County Office of Education, Vice Chair (Anne Wheelis, M.P.A., Alternate)
Mary Adams, President and CEO, United Way Monterey County (Katy Castagna, Alternate)
Jayanti Addleman, County Librarian, Monterey County Free Libraries (Ruth Paget, Alternate)
Valerie Barnes, M.D., Director of Pediatrics, Natividad Medical Center (David Maradei, Alternate)
Wayne Clark, Ph.D., Director, Behavioral Health Department
James Egar, Public Defender (Catherine Brennan, Alternate)
Dean Flippo, District Attorney (Sue Stryker, Alternate)
Len Foster, Director, Health Department
Susan Gerard, Superintendent, San Antonio Union School District
Ronald E. Graddy, Child Care Planning Council (Larry Drury, Alternate)
Mike Kanalakis, Sheriff (Commander Fabian Barrera, Alternate)
Harvey Kuffner, Member-at-Large
Todd Lueders, President and CEO, Community Foundation for Monterey County (Jeff Bryant, Alternate)
Bob McElroy, County Librarian, Monterey County Free Libraries (Harriet Duarte, Alternate)
Charles McKee, County Counsel (Annette Cutino, Alternate)
James Nakashima, Executive Director, Housing Authority of Monterey County (Anthony Caldwell, Alternate)
John Pinio, Director, Monterey County Parks Department (Stella Sandoval, Alternate)
Carolyn Post, Superintendent, North Monterey County Unified School District
Judge Jonathan Price, Monterey County Juvenile Court
Elliott Robinson, Director, Department of Social and Employment Services
Ruben Pulido, Superintendent, Alisal Union School District
Supervisor Simon Salinas, District 3 (Darlene Dunham, Alternate)
Supervisor Ila Mettee-McCutchon, District 4
Shirley Stihler, Early Start, Monterey County Office of Education
Robert Taniguchi, Deputy Director, Monterey County Department of Social and Employment Services

Ex-Officio Member
Francine Rodd, Executive Director, First 5 Monterey County

2007 – 2008 Executive Committee
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Mary Adams, President and CEO, United Way Monterey County
Len Foster, Director, Health Department
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Elliott Robinson, Director, Department of Social and Employment Services
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