

## A.

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Department of Child Services began the process of analyzing service availability, delivery and perceived effectiveness in September 2009. This planning process culminates in the Biennial Regional Services Strategic Plan (the Plan). The Plan encompasses the Early Intervention Plan, Child Protection Plan, and Regional Service Plan. The Early Intervention Plan was completed historically to list and summarize child abuse prevention efforts in a county. The Child Protection Plan outlined the policies and procedures surrounding services delivered by the Department of Child Services to assess families after an allegation of abuse or neglect has been made. The Regional Service Plan outlined the intervention services contracted by DCS. The Early Intervention Plan, Child Protection Plan and Regional Service Plan have been all combined into one plan, the Biennial Regional Services Strategic Plan.

The planning process to develop the Plan involved a series of activities led by a guided workgroup composed of representatives from the community. The activities included a needs assessment survey, public testimony, and review of relevant data. While DCS has several other mediums with which to determine effectiveness of DCS provided services, such as practice indicator reports, Quality Service Reviews (QSRs) and Quality Assurance Reviews (QARs), this process took that information and looked at it through a contracted service lens. The workgroup considered results from the QSR and practice indicators in conjunction with the needs assessment, previous service utilization and public testimony to determine the appropriate utilization of available services and to identify gaps in service. As a result, the workgroup developed a regional action plan to address service needs and gaps. The workgroup completed budget projections by service for the next fiscal year as well as the next biennial budget. It was assumed budget amounts would remain flat lined so the workgroup focused on how funds might be shifted

## **Summary of Needs Assessment and Public Testimony**

Each region in the state conducted a needs assessment survey of local professionals who have experience with child welfare services. The intent of the survey was to evaluate local service needs. Results of the survey were to be used to assist in determining the Region 8 child welfare service needs and the appropriate service delivery mechanisms. Each Department of Child Services (DCS) Local Office Director (LOD) created an e-mail contact list of local child welfare professionals and other “key informants” within the county. (See Section F for a complete list of key informant categories.) An electronic version of the needs assessment survey was disseminated to all persons on the contact lists. The survey was comprised of 68 items, including both services funded through DCS, as well as other community-based services that are not currently funded through DCS. Survey respondents were asked to rate each service in terms of availability of that service to children and families, and to rate the effectiveness of that service.

In Region 8, approximately 218 surveys were distributed by the LODs. There were 50 responses returned. Forty-two (42) percent of the respondents were from DCS, 18% of the respondents were contracted DCS service or community providers, 6% were from probation, 5% were from the education (school) community; the remaining 29% fell into a variety of respondent categories. There were no juvenile judges within the region that who responded to the survey.

In general, DCS staff and DCS contracted provider respondents ranked the availability of services in the region higher than did the probation respondents and the courts/law enforcement agencies/Court Appointed Special Advocates/Guardian ad Litem respondents. In terms of quality of services within the region, most services ranked higher in availability also received a higher ranking in the quality of service provided. DCS provider respondents ranked the quality of services provided highest of all respondents, DCS staff and probation ranked quality lower, and the courts/law enforcement agencies/Court Appointed Special Advocates/Guardian ad Litem respondent categories ranked quality the lowest among these respondents.

Services rating the highest in availability in the region were:

- Special education
- Early childhood intervention developmental delays
- Early childhood education/preschool programs
- Outpatient substance abuse services for adults
- Office-based licensed counseling services

There was little deviation by county within the region regarding the highest ratings of the availability of services; the one exception was Parke County. Parke rated several services involving foster care and adoption among their highest available services.

Services rating the lowest in availability in the region where:

- Translation services
- Inpatient substance abuse treatment services for youth
- Support services for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth
- Shelter services for homeless or runaway youth
- Transitional/supervised living apartments for older youth in foster care

There was a definite deviation by county within the region regarding the lowest ratings of the availability of services. Because there were only 50 respondents and Vigo County, (the largest, most urban county in the region) had approximately 42% of the respondents., These respondents were able to skew the results towards their rating preferences, as bulleted above. In three of the other counties in the region (Clay, Sullivan, Vermillion), services related to “shelter” ranked among the lowest in availability – shelter services for homeless and runaway youth, battered woman, and family shelters - because these services did not exist in the three counties or existed in very limited quantities. In Parke, service availability related to support services for kinship caregivers, services to at-risk families of diverse backgrounds and adult-child mentoring programs ranked the lowest in availability.

After review of all the survey findings, the workgroup noted the low ratings concerning service availability (a large number of Disagree or Strongly Disagree responses regarding the availability of a service) for a considerable number of services listed on the survey. The workgroup felt this could be caused by a lack of awareness, by staff within DCS and many external community partners, of the array of DCS contracted services and/or the resources in the community.

### Public Testimony

One person spoke at the public hearing held in the region on September 23, 2009. Public testimony given at the public hearing focused on the need for collaboration between non-profit agencies and county agencies.

## **Summary of Available Services**

The Department of Child Services (DCS) makes every effort to offer an efficient and comprehensive array of services to meet the needs of children and families they serve. Service needs vary greatly from region to region within the State and to a lesser degree from county to county within a region. The present process is designed to more clearly identify areas of service availability and/or gaps that may require further attention from DCS. Service offerings detailed in Section H fall into one of two basic categories, *prevention* services and *intervention* services. Prevention services are utilized to prevent formal DCS involvement; Intervention services are characterized by a formal involvement of the DCS in a case.

It is the goal of both the Department of Child Services and Juvenile Probation to prevent unnecessary separation of children from their families by identifying family problems, assisting families in resolving them, and returning children who have been removed from their homes to their families.

Services offered may be preventative or intervening and may include but are not limited to:

- education
- counseling
- visitation
- sexual abuse treatment
- parent aid
- homemaker services
- home-based family services

Additionally, the DCS offers other ancillary and support services, including adoption services, foster parent training and support services, and Independent Living services for children aging out of the system.

Prevention services may include services accessed by DCS referral, but not funded by the DCS or provided by a DCS contracted provider. Preventative services also include the Community Partners for Child Safety (CPCS) program and the Healthy Families Indiana program.

- Community Partners for Child Safety (CPCS) provides an array of child abuse and neglect prevention services. The program is available to families not actively involved with the Department of Child Services or Healthy Families. The CPSC program offers a service continuum that builds community support for families identified through self-referral or community agency referral by connecting these families to resources needed to strengthen the family and prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Healthy Families Indiana is a voluntary home visitation program designed to promote healthy families and children (0-5 years of age) by reducing child abuse and neglect, childhood health problems, and juvenile delinquency through a variety of services, including child development, access to health care, and parent education. The program systematically identifies families that could benefit from education and support services

either before or immediately after birth. Families identified to have a need are offered the opportunity to participate in a voluntary home visiting program tailored to their individual needs.

- Other prevention services available include First Steps, Indiana Youth Service Bureaus, ARC agencies, and domestic violence intervention. A listing of all services available to families and children in the region can be found in sections H. b. and e.

The table below indicates the types of DCS service priority for the region as reflected through their expenditure/purchase of services, and the number of families served. The top five DCS service type expenditures for the region from January 1 – August 31, 2009 were:

Service Type	Expenditure*	# of families & clients served
Home-based family centered casework services	\$131,893.24	52
Home-based family centered therapy services	\$ 87,046.00	31
Homemaker / parent aid	\$ 55,559.25	24
Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$ 37,405.34	17
Counseling – individual /family	\$ 35,727.53	44

\* The Expenditure/dollar amount next to the Service Type represents the funds reported by providers and billed to state DCS during the period of 1/1/09 to 8/31/09. These figures do not include Medicaid billings or drug testing costs.

The Region 8 workgroup reviewed all documents described in Section H. Data provided in these documents were analyzed and discussed. There were recurrent themes in the availability and accessibility of services for the region that were identified for those services that DCS has the capacity to purchase, and for services that are not purchased by DCS.

Region-wide common themes for DCS purchased services were identified as:

- A number of DCS purchased services do not have a locally based provider in the county; rather, a staff person may be available for limited hours
- There are few, if any, options of providers in the four rural counties
- Several of the counties lack an adequate number of DCS foster homes
- The DCS treatment plans rely heavily on home-based services, primarily because of the rural nature of most of the counties

Region-wide common themes for services that are beyond the scope of the DCS purchased services were identified as:

- Transportation in four of the counties (rural) is an issue and a significant barrier to families obtaining and continuing services
- Methamphetamine is an issue throughout much of the region

Presented below is a closer look at each county within the region, summarizing several common factors, factors that make it unique within the region; their challenges with the availability and accessibility to services; and their top five DCS service type expenditures/purchases from January 1 – August 31, 2009.

Clay County (population – 26,800; county seat is Brazil)

- Has relatively stable employment and economy – several large manufacturers located in county
- There is an adequate number of locally-based services, making access to services easier than in other very rural counties in the region
- Works well with their community mental health center
- Transportation can be seen as an issue outside of Brazil
- There is a significant amount of methamphetamine use and a relatively high rate of sexual abuse
- There is an adequate number of locally-based services, making access to services easier than in other very rural counties in the region
- Have relied heavily on home-based services

Service Type	Expenditure
Counseling – individual /family	\$33,873.65
Substance abuse assessment, treatment, & monitoring	\$14,697.54
Home-based family centered casework services	\$ 8,876.62
Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$ 6,796.52
Diagnostic and evaluation services	\$ 1,358.00

Parke County (population 17,000; county seat is Rockville)

- Smallest DCS office in the region
- Extremely rural county and a high degree of isolation
- Many of the jobs are part-time or seasonal and without benefits
- Lack of safe, affordable low-income housing
- Have limited services available locally; residents have to travel to Terre Haute, Brazil, or Crawfordsville to obtain many of the services
- Transportation is an issue
- Have an adequate number of foster homes; other counties often use their foster homes
- Have relied heavily on home-based services

Service Type	Expenditure
Home-based family centered casework services	\$42,778.75
Home-based family centered therapy services	\$13,002.00

Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$ 5,934.52
Chafee foster care independence program	\$ 3,834.00
Voluntary Chafee foster care independence program	\$ 532.50

Sullivan County (population – 21,500; county seat is Sullivan)

- A predominately rural county
- Is a close-knit community
- Employment and economy are relatively stable; have several large manufacturers located in the county
- Most services are available locally
- There is a significant amount of methamphetamine use
- Transportation is an issue outside of Sullivan
- Lack of adequate number of foster homes
- Have relied heavily on home-based services by providers outside of the county

Service Type	Expenditure
Home-based family centered casework services	\$17,858.00
Home-based family centered therapy services	\$13,354.00
Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$ 5,878.02
Chafee foster care independence program	\$ 3,885.00
Homemaker / parent aid	\$ 2,343.00

Vermillion County (population – 16,500; county seat is Newport)

- Most isolated county in the region; it is a geographically long, narrow county
- Accessibility to services is an issue, particularly in the northern portion of the county; families have to travel to Terre Haute to access many services
- Transportation is a significant issue
- Use of methamphetamine and the abuse of prescription drugs is very prevalent
- Poorest county in the region
- Lack of adequate number of foster homes
- Have relied heavily on home-based services

Service Type	Expenditure
Home-based family centered casework services	\$25,232.63
Home-based family centered therapy services	\$16,104.00
Substance abuse assessment, treatment, & monitoring	\$13,886.00
Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$ 6,093.16
Voluntary Chafee foster care independence program	\$ 2,961.00

Vigo County (population – 106,000; county seat is Terre Haute)

- Most urban county in the region, though outside of Terre Haute it is rural
- Has several colleges/universities located within the county
- Employment and economy is relatively stable
- Has largest population diversity in the county
- Has a public transportation system; however transportation is an issue outside of Terre Haute
- Methamphetamine use is a serious problem
- Has an adequate number of foster homes; infrequent use of Licensed Child Placement Agency (LCPA) foster homes
- Have primarily used home-based services and office-based services

Service Type	Expenditure
Homemaker / parent aid	\$53,216.25
Home-based family centered therapy services	\$44,586.00
Home-based family centered casework services	\$37,147.25
Voluntary Chafee foster care independence program	\$13,344.80
Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$12,703.12

## **Summary of Spending**

Region 8 has historically spent a significant amount of their allocated funds on home-based services. This has been the predominate service delivery mechanism in the five counties within the region. Home-based family centered casework services, home-based family centered therapy services and homemaker / parent aid services have all been used extensively in working with families and children. The region has also spent heavily on foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training, and counseling – individual / family. The predominance of this spending however, was not verified in the responses from the Needs Assessment Survey. Results from Region 8's surveys did not showed any of these services as being in the top five of perceived available services in the region. A summary of the top five region-wide service expenditures from January 1 – August 31, 2009 is as follows:

Service Type	Expenditure*
Home-based family centered casework services	\$131,893.24
Home-based family centered therapy services	\$ 87,046.00
Homemaker / parent aid	\$ 55,559.25
Foster / adoptive / kinship caregiver training	\$ 37,405.34
Counseling – individual /family	\$ 35,727.53

\* The Expenditure/dollar amount next to the Service Type represents the funds reported by providers and billed to state DCS during the period of 1/1/09 to 8/31/09. These figures do not include Medicaid billings or drug testing costs.

In a similar review of total service expenditures for the region, a number of services showed no expenditures for the period January 1 – August 31, 2009, indicating no use of this contracted service in the first 8 months of 2009.

Service Type	Expenditure
Adoption – child preparation	\$0.00
Care Network	\$0.00
Chafee IL – Chafee mentoring /lifelong connections	\$0.00
Home-based intensive family preservation services	\$0.00
Home-based intensive family reunification services	\$0.00
Parent education	\$0.00
Parent / family functioning assessment	\$0.00
Residential detoxification	\$0.00
Transition from restrictive placement (TRP)	\$0.00

Educating the DCS staff, juvenile probation and community partners regarding the array of services available through the DCS is one of the priorities identified by the workgroup for improvement and was developed as an action step for this plan.

In 2008 and 2009 there was a varied amount of spending as a percent of their total county budget by child welfare and by juvenile probation on institutional care and preservation services in each of the five counties within the region. In two of the counties, Vermillion and Vigo, child welfare spent a larger percentage of their total county budget on institutional care than juvenile probation spent on institutional care. In two of the counties, Parke and Sullivan, juvenile probation spent a larger percentage of their total county budget on institutional care. In the remaining county, Clay, child welfare spent more on institutional care as a percentage of their total county budget in 2008, and in 2009 juvenile probation spent more on institutional care.

Child welfare spending on institutional care, as a percent of the total dollars spent per county in this region, ranges from between 4-79% of the total county budget, but typically is between 20-50% of the total county budget. Juvenile probation spending on institutional care, as a percent of the total dollars spent per county in this region, ranges between 13-89% of the total county budget, but it is typically between 33-50% of the total county budget.

Child welfare spending on preservation services, as a percent of the total dollars spent per county in this region, ranges from between 6-16% of the total county budget; juvenile probation spending on preservation services, as a percent of the total dollars spent per county in this region, ranges between 0-14% of the total county budget, but is primarily between 0-2% of the total county budget.

Below is a brief summary of spending on institutional care and preservation services per county taken from annualized amounts for 2008 and 2009.

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Clay County** in 2008

Total Expended: \$75,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$15,000	20%	-	0%
Preservation	\$15,000	20%	\$45,000	60%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Clay County** in 2009

Total Expended: \$271,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$30,000	11%	\$96,000	36%
Preservation	\$93,000	34%	\$52,000	19%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Parke County** in 2008

Total Expended: \$502,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$166,000	33%	\$226,000	45%
Preservation	\$40,000	8%	\$70,000	14%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Parke County** in 2009

Total Expended: \$266,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$97,000	36%	\$123,000	46%
Preservation	\$42,000	16%	\$4,000	2%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Sullivan County** in 2008

Total Expended: \$241,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$107,000	44%	\$113,000	47%
Preservation	\$21,000	9%	-	0%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Sullivan County** in 2009

Total Expended: \$287,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$12,000	4%	\$256,000	89%
Preservation	\$19,000	7%	-	0%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Vermillion County** in 2008

Total Expended: \$613,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$364,000	59%	\$211,000	34%
Preservation	\$34,000	6%	\$4,000	1%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Vermillion County** in 2009

Total Expended: \$485,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$384,000	79%	\$63,000	13%
Preservation	\$30,000	6%	\$8,000	2%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Vigo County** in 2008

Total Expended: \$2,007,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$1,018,000	51%	\$853,000	42%
Preservation	\$114,000	6%	\$22,000	1%

Total Amount Expended by Child Welfare and Probation  
Institutions vs. Preservation in **Vigo County** in 2009

Total Expended: \$1,613,000\*

	Child Welfare		Probation	
	Amount Spent	% of Total	Amount Spent	% of Total
Institutions	\$871,000	54%	\$602,000	37%
Preservation	\$124,000	8%	\$16,000	1%

\* Dollar amounts taken from the Annualized amounts for 2008 and 2009 of the 2010 Budget by County document from the DCS Budget Section

## **Summary of Regional Plan**

The Regional Action Plan presented in this section is based on all data collected that addressed regional service needs. These data sources assessed the following areas:

- Service availability (through the needs assessment survey, Section E),
- Service effectiveness (through the needs assessment survey, Section E),
- Public perception of regional child welfare services (through public hearings, Section F),
- Practice Indicators (13-month summaries from Aug. 09 - Section G),
- Regional workgroup determination of service available/accessibility (service array table with codes, Section H), and
- Additional input provided by the workgroup.

These data sources were considered by regional workgroups to determine service needs that were to be prioritized by a region for the relevant biennium. To address these service needs, regional workgroups formulated action steps, which included distinct, measurable outcomes. Action steps also identified the relevant parties to carry out identified tasks, time frames for completion of tasks, and regular monitoring of progress towards task completion.

The Region 8 workgroup, through analysis of the above data, group discussion, and individual knowledge and experience, developed the following Action Plan.

### **1. Increase the engagement of fathers in 2010 by 10% in cases where fathers had not been previously involved with their families**

Region 8 has been chosen to participate in a Fatherhood Initiative that is coordinated by the DCS Central Office and Casey Family Programs. Working in collaboration with Children's Bureau, the region will complete the following tasks by April 2010: will submit a proposal for the design and implementation of their initiative; will hire a Coordinator to manage the initiative; will conduct a one-day training to train/educate staff; will establish a Fatherhood Board; will identify missing/disengaged fathers and begin the engagement process, and will monitor progress of the initiative on an on-going basis.

### **2. Increase and sustain the number of foster care homes in 2010 by 10% of licensed homes as of February 1, 2010**

Beginning in January 2010, Region 8 will create a Foster Care Specialists Team; will provide a two-day training to the team; will assess the needs of foster care homes; will develop and initiate a plan for retention of current foster care homes and recruitment of new homes, and will monitor progress on an on-going basis.

### **3. Educate key stakeholders and community partners on the DCS array of services**

During the second quarter of 2010, Region 8 will create a listing of all services available in each of the five counties; will identify a list of key stakeholders and community members in each county who could benefit from this information; will develop different venues in which to provide this information, and will monitor the success of the education initiative by creating a survey to determine if those receiving this information increased their awareness of available services.

#### **4. Provide domestic violence services**

Beginning in the second quarter of 2010, Region 8 will assess the need for domestic violence services in the region; will identify current available services (if any); develop a Request For Proposal using the Domestic Violence Service Standard and will pursue other organizations / providers who are experienced in working with domestic violence; will evaluate potential funding sources; will make a final determination if domestic violence treatment will be a part of the Region 8 service array.

## **Summary Unmet Needs**

During the course of the planning process, there were a number of issues the workgroup identified that Region 8 lacked in adequately meeting the needs and challenges of many of their families and children. The consensus of the workgroup regarding the most pressing issues was as follows:

- Transportation in rural counties
- The lack of shelter services for homeless or runaway youth
- The lack of transitional / supervised housing and / or apartments for older youth in foster care and delinquent youth
- The lack of safe, affordable housing

Reliable transportation in four of the rural counties within the region remains a significant problem and barrier to obtain services for the families working with the DCS. Rural counties have very limited, if any, public transportation available. Many families working with DCS do not have consistently reliable automobiles of their own or reliable means of transportation from their family or friends.

Particularly in the four smaller counties (Clay, Parke, Sullivan, and Vermillion), shelter services for homeless or runaway youth do not exist. This makes it difficult when working with older youth particularly that cannot (for safety reasons) go home or do not want to go home. In addition, Vigo County has very limited respite options to handle the entire region.

For older youth who are in need of an independent living plan, there is not a program in place in Region 8 that can provide transitional, supervised housing / apartments. This is a challenge both juvenile probation and the DCS struggle with when trying to prepare youth as they age out of the juvenile system.

With much of the region existing at the poverty level, safe and affordable housing remains a challenge for many of the families. There are instances where children have been removed from the home due to the unsafe housing conditions. The high level of unemployment in the region compounds the safe housing issue for many families; they cannot afford to fix-up their home to a safe standard or to move into a better housing.