

Quality and Productivity Commission
33rd Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program
“Empowering Innovative Solutions”

2019 APPLICATION

Title of Project (Limited to 50 characters, including spaces, using Arial 12 point font):

NAME OF PROJECT: MOVING FAMILIES FROM THE HOTLINE TO A HELPLINE

DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION/ADOPTION: JULY 1, 2018

(Must have been fully implemented for a minimum of at least one year - on or before July 1, 2018)

PROJECT STATUS: Ongoing One-time only

HAS YOUR DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED THIS PROJECT? Yes No



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Describe the project in 15 lines or less using Arial 12 point font. State clearly and concisely what difference the project has made.

1 Each year, the Department of Children and Family Services’ (DCFS) Hotline receives
 2 over 220,000 calls reporting suspected child abuse or neglect. Not all calls rise to the
 3 level of needing an investigation, but thousands of those families can benefit from
 4 community prevention supports. Yet, only 1 out of every 10 families offered community
 5 services by DCFS in 2017 were connected. Many families declined, and excessive wait
 6 times for those who were interested resulted in an additional 339 families dropping out of
 7 the process, never getting the help they needed. Lean Six Sigma principles were applied
 8 to streamline the linkage process, re-imagine DCFS and community-partner roles, and
 9 set up multidisciplinary teams. As a result, 734 families were connected to prevention
 10 supports this year, more than tripling the number from 2017. Enrollment wait times were
 11 reduced by 48.15%, as families received services up to 13 business days faster. The
 12 rate of children re-referred to DCFS who had been abused or neglected dropped by
 13 1.22%, and, of those re-referred, 16.54% more children safely remained in their homes,
 14 resulting in a cost avoidance to the County. In just its first year, this project has already
 15 improved child safety and increased family stability for our residents and communities.

BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY

(1) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST AVOIDANCE	(2) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL COST SAVINGS	(3) ACTUAL/ESTIMATED ANNUAL REVENUE	(1) + (2) + (3) = TOTAL ANNUAL ACTUAL/ESTIMATED BENEFIT	SERVICE ENHANCEMENT PROJECT
\$173,444.90	\$N/A	\$N/A	\$173,444.90	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

ANNUAL = 12 MONTHS ONLY

SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS Board of Supervisors, Executive Office 500 West Temple Street, Room 383 Los Angeles, CA 90012	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-1401
PROGRAM MANAGER’S NAME Carrie Miller Office of Child Protection (OCP)	TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 893-0862 EMAIL cmiller@ocp.lacounty.gov
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME AND SIGNATURE (PLEASE CALL (213) 893-0322 IF YOU DO NOT KNOW YOUR PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER’S NAME) Susan Huff 	DATE 6-28-19 TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 893-2509 EMAIL shuff@bos.lacounty.gov
DEPARTMENT HEAD’S NAME AND SIGNATURE Celia Zavala 	DATE 6/26/19 TELEPHONE NUMBER (213) 974-1401

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1st FACT SHEET – LIMITED UP TO 3 PAGES ONLY: Describe the **challenge(s), solution(s), and benefit(s)** of the project to the County. What quality and/or productivity-related outcome(s) has the project achieved? Provide measures of success and **specify assessment time frame**. Use Arial 12 point font.

BACKGROUND: When families are reported to the DCFS Hotline for suspected child abuse or neglect, their issues sometimes do not meet criteria for an investigation. The Hotline closes these calls and no further follow-up occurs (they are “evaluated out”). Data suggest that many of these families are vulnerable to being re-referred back to DCFS for another allegation, and could benefit from connections to preventive supports. DCFS addressed this gap in the child-welfare continuum by instituting the Community Prevention Linkages (CPL) project at the Hotline, linking families to community supports offered by its contracted Prevention and Aftercare (P&A) networks. In early 2018, after reviewing CPL’s low service-connection data, partners worked to improve engagement by using Lean Six Sigma’s method (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, Control). The revised program launched on July 1, 2018.

CHALLENGE: Of the 223,422 Hotline calls received in 2017, a total of 66,741 were investigated; of the 19,908 calls evaluated out, 2,257 of these families (11%) were referred to P&A networks for help with a significant need. The 10 P&As networks, covering each Service Planning Area plus two population based, offer voluntary supports proven to strengthen family functioning—wellness activities, peer support, parent education, child development programs, employment-skills, financial-stability, and emergency aid. They also offer non-traditional supports showing great promise with underserved groups—yoga, poetry slams, drumming, and community gardens.

The connection rate for families offered these supports by DCFS, however, was very low. Using Lean Six Sigma principles, we identified the contributing root causes:

- DCFS’s limited ability to make multiple follow-up calls and to speak in languages other than English and Spanish
- The generally negative reputation that child protective services have in many communities, making families reluctant or afraid to engage with DCFS
- Too many back-and-forth “handoffs” between DCFS and P&A providers

Baseline data in 2017 showed that 1,694 families declined the support offered, and excessive wait times for services (up to 27 business days) led another 339 families who were interested to drop out. Only 224 families were connected to P&A agencies.

SOLUTION: The vision for this project was to increase connections for a critical segment of at-risk families (from the Hotline) to risk-mitigating preventive community support, by boosting service-connection rates and slashing service wait times.

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Using Lean Six Sigma methods, we made the following changes:

- **Shifted roles** so that trusted community-based P&As, rather than DCFS, take the lead in engaging families and offering preventive community supports
- **Established multidisciplinary teams (MDTs)** with staff from DCFS, the P&A agencies, and the Department of Mental Health (DMH) that meet daily to discuss presenting issues and identify the right supports before contacting families
- **Simplified work processes** to shorten wait times for services and minimize the number of handoffs between DCFS and the P&A agencies
- **Retrained all Hotline staff** on program criteria, the types of prevention supports available in specific communities, and the new streamlined process
- **Standardized data collection and tracking** across the P&A networks

This project’s most important innovation has been shifting the role of approaching individual families from DCFS to the P&As. DCFS and DMH now partner with the P&A networks to prepare community providers for leading direct family engagement, a significant transformation from their past functions. Noteworthy, too, is the meaningful teaming being achieved among DCFS, DMH, and the 10 P&A networks of agencies, resulting from the MDT formation. Public and private sectors work together as they are each best equipped—and have developed trusting relationships, respect for one another’s expertise, and effective methods of communication and problem-solving—to create a more effective and efficient continuum of care.

Partner Contributions: The CPL project redesign was a highly collaborative process among the Office of Child Protection (OCP)—housed in the Board of Supervisors’ Executive Office—DCFS, DMH, the University of Southern California’s School of Social Work (USC) and the 10 P&A community networks. All contributed extensively to both redesign and implementation. The OCP led the project management of the initiative. DCFS oversees the program’s ongoing implementation. DMH outstationed a clinician at the Hotline to participate in the MDTs, and has made significant contributions to expand the P&A networks’ capacity to provide prevention supports to the community at large. (This was leveraged to avoid the need for new investments.) USC standardized the measures used by the P&A networks and is securing resources for a program evaluation. In addition, the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) offered key guidance and coaching on applying Lean Six Sigma methods to the redesign through its Green Belt project-management training and certification process. Los Angeles County Counsel also gave essential legal advice on shifting provider roles and establishing MDTs, critical components to the success of this project.

The redesign process and deployment took just under six months to complete—including getting Board approval, completing contract amendments, and training 192 Hotline staff and staff at P&As—showing nimbleness and the County’s desire to

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quickly improve processes that help families get the community supports they need.

BENEFITS: The redesigned program produced three significant results in its first year (July 1, 2018–June 25, 2019) compared to the baseline year (January 1, 2017–December 31, 2017):

1) Improved the identification of families and their connections to needed community supports

- The total number of families identified for supports ***almost doubled*** (2,257 in 2017 to 4,488 in year 1).
- The number of families connected to community supports ***more than tripled*** (224 in 2017 to 734 in year 1), an ***increase of 510 more families***.

2) Accelerated connections to community supports

- The excessive wait time for families connecting to supports was ***reduced by 13 business days***, from a maximum of 27 business days to a maximum of 14 business days (***almost 3 weeks faster***), a ***48.15% time reduction***.

3) Reduced re-referrals to DCFS and the need for foster-care placements within 6 months of first Hotline call (during which CPL families got services)

- The rate of children re-referred to DCFS with ***substantiated abuse or neglect dropped by 1.22%*** (4.23% for non-CPL families vs. 3.01% for CPL families).
- Of those children re-referred, the number needing to be placed in out-of-home care decreased (38.71% for non-CPL families vs. 22.17% for CPL families), as ***16.54% more*** CPL-program children were able to ***safely remain in their homes*** while their families received DCFS services.

Intangible Results: The triggering events that first bring “evaluated-out” families to DCFS create opportunities to offer help that can prevent more serious negative incidents from occurring—a long-sought goal in child welfare. A more efficient CPL program increases the likelihood of success in that effort, which in turn can reduce strain on an already overburdened system. The CPL program also aligns with the recent adoption of the Family First Prevention Services Act focused on prevention for at-risk families, and could draw down federal dollars for support in the future.

With trusted P&A agencies engaging families, residents know where to go in their communities to get support, even if they do not initially accept it. Hotline staff are now educated on community-based prevention supports—supports that are less intrusive than DCFS services—and are more likely to consider these support networks an important part of the child-welfare continuum.

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Linkage to the County Strategic Plan – 1 page only. Which County Strategic Plan goal(s) does this project address? Explain how. Use Arial 12 point font.

The CPL program exemplifies and helps achieve all three County strategic goals:

Make Investments That Transform Lives

- Works to prevent at-risk, vulnerable families from entering the child-welfare system and/or causing injury or death to a child
- Expands the child-welfare continuum of care to include community providers offering traditional and non-traditional supports to families from diverse communities across the county
- Provides targeted supports that better meet the needs of the families served, and reduces avoidable trauma to already stressed families
- Addresses the complex social issue of child safety head-on

Foster Vibrant and Resilient Communities

- Improves partnerships between County departments and community providers through true teaming and engagement that strengthens community support networks and the local safety net for families
- Enhances the wellness of our communities by connecting vulnerable families to preventive supports that strengthen them. While children live in families, families live in communities; all pillars need proper support to thrive.

Realize Tomorrow's Government Today

- Improves the operational effectiveness and efficiency of a vital part of the child-welfare continuum, mitigating the risk of families causing harm to a child or coming back to the system, and at the same time reducing stress on families and the system itself
- Creates efficiencies among DCFS staff by freeing up time for other critical activities and diversifying resources across departments (DCFS, OCP, and DMH)
- Standardizes and collects data to evaluate program effectiveness, which will be widely published and distributed among the public

Please consider this submission as a candidate to receive the Community Inclusion Award.

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COST AVOIDANCE, COST SAVINGS, AND REVENUE GENERATED (ESTIMATED BENEFITS TO THE COUNTY): If you are claiming cost benefits, include a calculation on this page. Please indicate whether these benefits apply in total or on a per unit basis, e.g., per capita, per transaction, per case, etc. You must include an explanation of the County cost savings, cost avoidance or new revenue that matches the numbers in the box. Remember to keep your supporting documentation. Use Arial 12 point font

Cost Avoidance: Costs that are eliminated or not incurred as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these are costs to the County or to other entities.

Cost Savings: A reduction or lessening of expenditures as a result of program outcomes. Please indicate whether these were expenditures by the County or by other entities.

Revenue: Increases in existing revenue streams or new revenue sources to the County as a result of program outcomes.

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\$173,444.90	\$N/A	\$N/A	\$173,444.90	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Non-CPL rates for re-referral to DCFS (4.23%) and foster care placement (38.71%):

734 families x 4.23% (re-referral rate) = 31.05 children x 38.71% (placement) = 12.02 children x \$2,619.38 (monthly cost) = \$31,484.95 x 12 months = \$377,819.40 annually

CPL rates for re-referral to DCFS (3.01%) and foster care placement (22.17%):

734 families x 3.01% (re-referral rate) = 22.09 children x 22.17% (placement) = 4.90 x \$2,619.38 (monthly cost) = \$12,834.96 x 12 months = \$154,019.52 annually

Difference between the two costs: \$377,819.40 - \$154,019.52 = \$223,799.88

Applying cost-sharing percentages:

\$223,799.88 x 22.5% (federal share)	\$50,354.97
\$223,799.88 x 31.0% (state realignment share)	\$69,377.96
\$223,799.88 x 46.5% (county share)	\$104,066.94

Since state realignment dollars were allocated to the County in 2011 and are now used to cover local costs at DCFS’s discretion, they are considered part of the local share.

Local share: \$69,377.96 + \$104,066.94 = \$173,444.90 annual county cost avoidance

- Every child diverted from foster-care **avoids an average county cost of \$24,360.23 per year** (\$2,619.38 x 12 = \$31,432.56 x 77.5% local cost share)
- We expect to see increases in future avoided costs, after families have received services for longer than six months.
- The 734 families who accepted services in year one were used for calculations.
- In LA County, the average time in foster care per child is 2.11 years.

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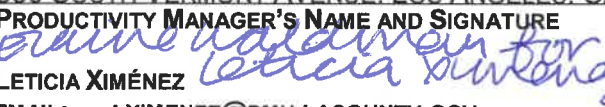
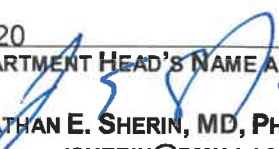


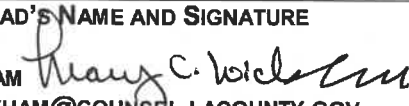

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FOR COLLABORATING DEPARTMENTS ONLY

(For single department submissions, do not include this page)

DEPARTMENT NO. 2 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES 425 SHATTO PLACE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90020	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  ARMAN DEPANIAN EMAIL: <u>DEPANA@DCFS.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  BOBBY D. CAGLE EMAIL: <u>BOBBY.CAGLE@DCFS.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>
DEPARTMENT NO. 3 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH 550 SOUTH VERMONT AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90020	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  LETICIA XIMÉNEZ EMAIL: <u>LXIMENEZ@DMH.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  JONATHAN E. SHERIN, MD, PH.D. EMAIL: <u>JSHERIN@DMH.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>
DEPARTMENT NO. 4 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK 12400 IMPERIAL HIGHWAY, NORWALK, CA 90650	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  ALEXANDER OGUNJI EMAIL: <u>AOGUNJI@RRCC.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  DEAN C. LOGAN EMAIL: <u>DLOGAN@RRCC.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>
DEPARTMENT NO. 5 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS COUNTY COUNSEL 500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, RM 648, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  JESUS CASTILLO EMAIL: <u>JCASTILLO@COUNSEL.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  MARY C. WICKHAM EMAIL: <u>MWICKHAM@COUNSEL.LACOUNTY.GOV</u>
DEPARTMENT NO. 6 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, SUZANNE DWORAK-PECK SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK 669 WEST 34 TH STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90089	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE N/A EMAIL: <u>N/A</u>	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE  JOHN D. CLAPP, PH.D., INTERIM DEAN EMAIL: <u>JOHNCLAP@UAC.EDU</u>
DEPARTMENT NO. 7 NAME AND COMPLETE ADDRESS	
PRODUCTIVITY MANAGER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE EMAIL: _____	DEPARTMENT HEAD'S NAME AND SIGNATURE EMAIL: _____

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