



What “Outcomes” Mean For Children And Families

California's new child welfare oversight and accountability system specifies key “outcomes” for which state and county child welfare officials are concentrating their focus and improvement efforts. Each of these outcomes, or goals, represents real and meaningful improvements in the lives of the 700,000 children who come into contact with the state's child welfare system annually. The following details how these goals translate into improving their lives and provides the framework against which data are collected and transmitted in the quarterly data reports provided to state and county welfare officials.

SAFETY OUTCOMES

We will know if children are safer if:

- Fewer children are abused and/or neglected
- Fewer children enter foster care
- Fewer children are re-abused and/or neglected when they remain in the home after a child abuse report investigation occurs
- Fewer children are abused and/or neglected while in foster care
- More children receive timely visits from their social worker

PERMANENCY AND STABILITY OUTCOMES

We will know if children have more stable and permanent homes if:

- Fewer children re-enter foster care
- Fewer children move from one foster care provider to another
- Children are reunified with their parents or caretakers more quickly
- Children who are freed for adoption enter permanent homes more quickly

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

We will know if family relationships and community connections are maintained if:

- More children are placed with some or all of their siblings
- A higher percentage of children in care are placed in the least restrictive foster care setting possible (i.e., a relative care placement or foster family home rather than group care)

WELL-BEING OUTCOMES

We will know if the well-being of children has improved if:

- Youth exiting foster care are more self-sufficient (i.e., more foster youth transitioning to adulthood have a diploma, independent living skills training and a means of support)
- Foster children receive more health and mental health services/support *
- Foster children are making more educational progress and increasing school attendance *

*Data not tracked at this time