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Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

September 30, 2009

The Honorable Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Governor Ritter:

This letter is sent as a cover to the report being submitted according to the requirements of C.R.S. 26-5.5-104 (6) that are as follows:

"On or after July 1, 1994, the Executive Director of the State Department shall annually evaluate the statewide Family Preservation Program (Program) and shall determine the overall effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the Program. On or before the first day of October of each year, the Executive Director of the State Department shall report such findings and shall make recommended changes, including budgetary changes, to the Program to the General Assembly, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Governor. In evaluating the Program, the Executive Director of the State Department shall consider any recommendations made by the interagency Family Preservation Commission in accordance with section 26-5.5-106. To the extent changes to the Program may be made without requiring statutory amendment, the Executive Director may implement such changes, including the changes recommended by the commission acting in accordance with subsection (7) of this section."

The following are the background and findings of program effectiveness, cost efficiencies, and recommended changes for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2008-2009 Core Services Program evaluation:

Background:

The Core Services Program was established within the Colorado Department of Human Services in 1994 and is statutorily mandated to provide strength-based resources and support to families when children are at imminent risk of out of home placement and/or are in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting. The Core Services Program (formerly known as Family Preservation) has been in operation for ten (10) years.

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Program Effectiveness:

Children Served

Children eligible to receive Core Services are at imminent risk of being placed out of home and/or are in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting. This refers to children who, without immediate intervention, services, and support would very likely have been removed from the home and placed under county or tribal custody.

A total of 16,066 children (unduplicated count) were identified in the Trails data system as having received at least one Core Service during SFY 2008-2009. This represents a 9.7% decline over the previous year. An explanation for this decline could be a relatively modest Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase over the past two state fiscal years, as well as state budget issues that have affected all departments. It has been noted that the numbers presented here undercount the actual number of children and families served, because of county-level variations in data entry practices. It is possible that the declines seen here are more representative of decreases in the amount of data being entered due to personnel and other resource constraints resulting from the current state budget realities than an actual decrease in the number of children being served. It is also possible that children with less severe needs have been diverted from Core Services and served through community partnerships like Collaborative Management. Another explanation may be that while fewer children are being served they are receiving more intensive evidence-based/promising practices and/or longer duration of services. Of the children served during this year, 10,558 began new service episodes during the state fiscal year.

Community Collaborations

The Department continues progress in integrating collaborative efforts with the Core Services Program and related efforts to prevent or minimize out of home placements. Such related initiatives include:

- ✓ Family to Family Principles
- ✓ Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program
- ✓ Collaborative Management Program (HB 04-1451)

While all counties and tribes may not formally participate in the collaboration initiatives outlined above, nearly all (85%) of counties and tribes reported that collaboration efforts are a part of their Core Services Program. These counties and tribes report that these efforts have allowed for improved cost efficiencies by decreasing duplication of services and improving use of all available community services.

Program Outcomes

In addition to the Division of Child Welfare requirements and desires to evaluate program effectiveness, the federal standards defined through the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA) and measured in the Colorado Child and Family Services Review (CFSR), help to shape the specific evaluation goals, as outcome data will be used for both state and federal oversight. Within these two sets of criteria, the ultimate assessment of the effectiveness of the Core Services Program will be the degree to which these services aid the Division of Child Welfare in meeting its mission to "help Colorado's children live in safe, healthy, and stable environments."

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Out-Of-Home (OOH) Placement Outcomes

Successfully Maintaining Children in the Home - A central goal of the Core Services program is to keep children and families together, by serving children who are at risk for out of home placement in the home, whenever appropriate and possible. On this measure, the Core Services Program is successful. Nearly all children with discharges in SFY 2008-2009 who were at home at the time core services began were maintained in their home during their Core Service episodes. Overall, only 7 percent of these children were placed out of the home during their service episode. In addition, children who received Core Services were less likely to experience an out of home placement during the 12 months following discharge from services. Moreover, data suggest that more services were related to reduced risk of out of home placement.

Serving Children in the Least Restrictive Setting - Of those children discharged during the state fiscal year, 20 percent (20%) were in an out of home placement on the date they began Core Services. Close to two-thirds (64%) of these children left the out of home placement and moved to a less restrictive setting (including returning home) during their Core Services episode.

Cost-Efficiencies

Multiplying the average length of stay by the number of children with placements during this period provides an estimate of how many days of out of home placement occur for this sample of children before and after their Core Services episode. In light of the high costs associated with out of home placements, the reduction in out of home placements points to a significant cost savings. Multiplying the number of children with an out of home placement in the 12 months prior to the episode (n=5,947) by the average number of days an individual child was placed out of home during those 12 months (141 days), one sees that 838,547 days were spent in out of home placement. When comparing that to the reduced number of children that experience an out of home placement after their Core Service episode (n=2,528) as well as to the lower average number of days in that placement (66 days), the total number of days in out of home placement is reduced by 166,848 days.

Overall Expenditures

Costs of the Core Services Program
In SFY 2008-2009, a total of $45,956,710 was allocated to the Family and Children's line and expended through the Core Services Program. This figure includes initial allocations to counties and one tribe. Through the Core Plan process, Counties requested an additional $4,184,471 in order to meet the growing needs for services in their communities. However, the requested additional funding was not available to meet the needs of children and families.

As reported in this year's Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Report, insufficient funding remains a challenge in providing adequate Core Services programs in order to prevent out of home placements. Each year, many counties and tribes use additional funding sources to support Core Services in their communities. This year, 45 counties reported using additional funding sources to fill critical gaps in services. Twenty-seven of these counties provided estimated amounts for the funding sources they used, totaling $6,216,921. In addition to this amount, an additional $255,758 of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) was used to support Core Services Programs. The remaining 18 counties (of the 45 reporting use of additional funds) reported funding sources but not specific dollar amounts. A list of additional funding sources as reported by the County Commissions is provided in the full report as Appendix B.

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State Fiscal Year 2008-09

July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

Colorado Department of Human Services

Offic   e of Ch   ildren   , Youth   h and F   Family   Servic   ces
Divis   ion of   Child W Welfare   e

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Core Services Program Evaluation
Annual Report

Submitted to:

Colorado Department of Human Services
Office of Children, Youth and Family Services
Division of Child Welfare

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Acknowledgements

This report reflects the effort of many people. TriWest Group and the Division of Child Welfare worked closely together and received input and data from the many participating counties and tribal nations. In particular, we would like to thank the following County Directors and Core Services staff for their efforts to enhance the Core Services Program and for their specific contributions to this report.

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Executive Summary

The Core Services Program was established within the Colorado Department of Human
Services in 1994 and is statutorily mandated to provide strength-based resources and support
to families when children are at imminent risk of out of home (OOH) placement and/or need of
services to maintain a least restrictive setting.

Context for the Current Report

The Department places a high priority on tracking and reporting on the effectiveness of the Core Services Program in order to promote safety and stability for all Colorado children. This evaluation examines outcomes and activities across 64 counties and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. This year's report introduces the use of cohort groups for the first time to explore outcomes in more detail than previously possible. Subsequent years of evaluation will build on this foundation to provide more useful and specific outcomes information that will help move toward a comprehensive, outcomes-driven evaluation of the Core Services Program.

This report marks the second year of a multi-phased evaluation approach developed by TriWest Group in partnership with the Division of Child Welfare and informed by the state and local leadership of the Core Services program. This year's report establishes three general cohorts of children served by the Core Services Program. Explained in the Methods section of this report, these initial cohorts will allow the evaluation, across annual reporting periods, to follow the progress of the Core Services program in 1) making the right services available at the right time to children and families at risk of out of home placement and/or in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting, 2) implementing intensive services that support and strengthen families, and 3) tracking service effectiveness by examining outcomes for cohorts of children as they leave the Core Services program.

This year's report has four objectives:

- To describe the implementation of the Core Services program. This includes a description of the risks and needs of children and families at risk of out of home placement and/or in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting served by the program, and descriptions of the services provided to support and strengthen families.
- To continue the effort to address requirements specified by the Legislative State Audit in May 2007 to develop a method to calculate an accurate cost per child that can be used to compare the costs and benefits of the Core Services Program.
- To report on 12-month outcomes for children who ended a Core Services episode during SFY 2007-2008.
- To describe county-specific implementation challenges and opportunities.

Core Services Goals

1. Focus on family strengths by directing intensive services that support and strengthen the family and protect the child;
2. Prevent out of home placement;
3. Return children in placement to their own home; or unite children with their permanent families.
4. Provide services that protect the child.

The ultimate purpose of this evaluation is to provide stakeholders with actionable information on both the successes and opportunities for improvements for the Core Services Program.

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Core Services Program Overview

Core Services funding is allocated individually to each of the 64 Colorado Counties and, as of

SFY 2007, to the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. The purpose of this funding is to provide "family preservation services," defined in statute (C.R.S. 26-5.5-103) as assistance that focuses on a family's strengths and empowers a family by providing alternative problem-solving techniques, child-rearing practices and responses to living situations creating stress for the family. This includes resources that are available to supplement existing informal support systems for the family. The array of services used by counties in support of family preservation makes up the Core Services Program.

Table I shows the percentage of counties that utilized each type of service during SFY 2008-09. Please see Appendix B for a detailed description of each type of Core Service as well as a discussion of general availability throughout the state.

Table I: Core Services Utilization by Counties and Tribal Areas

Core Service Type	Percent of Counties Using[1]
Mental Health Services	93%
Substance Abuse Treatment	88%
Intensive Family Therapy	80%
Special Economic Assistance	79%
Home-Based Services	71%
County Designed Services	69%
Life Skills	67%
Day Treatment	51%
Sexual Abuse Treatment	51%

In addition to these services $4,088,723 is earmarked specifically for the Core Services Program to provide evidence based services to adolescents. These additional funds are allocated to counties through a request for applications (RFA) process and are considered essential to the sustainability of evidence based services and promising practices in Colorado.

Implementation of Core Services

Children Served During SFY 2008-09

Children eligible to receive Core Services are at imminent risk of being placed out of home and/or in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting. This refers to children who, without immediate intervention, services, and support would very likely have been removed from the home and placed under county or tribal custody.

Core Services are delivered directly to the child or to caregivers and other family members on behalf of the child – whatever it takes to safely and successfully maintain the child in the home.

A total of 16,066 children (unduplicated count) were identified in the Trails data system as having received at least one Core Service during SFY 2008-09. This represents a 9.7% decline over the previous year. An explanation for this decline could be a relatively modest Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase over the past two fiscal years, as well as state budget issues that have affected nearly all departments. It has been noted that, because of county-level variations in data entry practices, the numbers presented here undercount the actual number of children and families served. It is possible that the declines seen here are more representative of decreases in the

[1] Based on whether at least one service authorization of the Core Services type was entered into Trails by that county.

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amount of data being entered due to personnel and other resource constraints resulting from the current state budget realities than an actual decrease in the number of children being served. Another explanation may be that, while fewer children are being served, they are receiving *more* intensive and/or longer duration of services. Of those children served during this year, 10,558 began new service episodes during the fiscal year.

Risk of Out of Home Placement

In order for Core Services to be authorized for a child, the caseworker must document imminent risk for out of home placement and/or the need for services to maintain a least restrictive setting in the Trails. Risk Assessments completed by caseworkers indicated all children (100% of children) beginning Core Services during SFY 2008-2009 had at least one risk factor for out of home placement. The specific factors that caseworkers reported varied across children served, with the majority of children (60%) having multiple risk factors. Nearly half of all children served had two to three risk factors present. A small proportion (12%) had four or more risk factors present at the time of assessment.

Figure I, below, shows the proportion of children by type of risk factor present in the home. Note that the percentages do not add to 100 because many children have more than one factor present at the time of the risk assessment.

Well over half of children served had a history of out of home placement prior to receiving Core Services.

Figure I: Distribution of Risk Factors Across Children Served

Abuse or Neglect
Substance Abuse
Beyond Control of Parents
Mental Illness
Domestic Violence
Delinquency
Danger to Self/Others
Parent Abandonment
Homelessness
Physical Disability
Child Returning from OOH
Relinquish/Terminate Parental Rights
Physical Illness
Death of Parent
Child of Teen Parent in Placement

0.0   5.0 10.0 15.0 20.0 25.0 30.0 35.0 40.0 45.0

Percent of Children Served

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More than 40 percent of children served were at risk for out-of-home placement due to child abuse or neglect in the home. Parental problems such as substance abuse (37%), mental illness (17%) and domestic violence (14%) also commonly led to a risk of children being placed out of the home. In some cases, the child's behavior led to out of home placement risk, including being labeled "beyond control of parents" (26%), or committing delinquent acts (11%).

Services Provided

The majority of service authorizations entered into Trails were paid under fee-for-service. This logically follows from the administrative requirement that fee for service contracts require all services to be entered into Trails in order for payment, while fixed rate contracts require only one service authorization to be entered even when multiple services are provided. Overall

> The majority of service authorizations in Trails are for fee for service. This is consistent with the administrative requirement related to payments – this may or may not reflect actual proportions of services provided to children.

service authorization treatment was the most common proportion of services. Routine (25.9%). A high proportion of county designed services (as entered into Trails) only provided over one quarter received two different types of service, while the remaining 23 percent received three or more different types of Core Services through the fiscal year. It is possible that more children received services at more children received without... due to current Trails data entry practices.

multiple Core Services than were recorded due to current Trails data. county designed services is provided in Appendix B of this document.

Figure II: Distribution of Service Authorizations, by Contract Type

County Reports - Challenges Related to Service Availability

Roughly half of all counties (48%) reported that the current array of Core Services available meets existing community need. A similar number (41%) reported that needed services are currently not available in their communities. Most counties that reported problems with access to services noted that

Inadequate Resources – Half of counties reported that necessary services are not available for their children and families.

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transportation barriers represent a significant obstacle for families in accessing services.

Another common concern is the lack of providers generally, as well as the lack of some specific types of providers (e.g., sexual offense-specific treatment, substance abuse). Particularly in areas where the population is small, the need may not be sufficient to sustain a provider for a specific type of service. Some rural counties address this issue by pooling resources for a single provider that can serve multiple communities. However, the distance families are required to travel to and from providers makes this kind of service sharing challenging.

Costs of the Core Services Program
In SFY 2008-09, a total of $ 50,577,537 of State general fund dollars was expended on the Core Services Program. This figure includes initial allocations to counties and tribes ($45,956,710), and additional Core Services funding requests ($4,184,471). An additional $255,758 of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) supported core services programs.

As reported in this year's Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Report insufficient funding remains a challenge in providing adequate Core Services programs in order to prevent out of home placements. Each year, many counties and tribes use additional funding sources to support Core Services in their communities. This year, 45 counties reported using additional funding sources to fill critical gaps in services. Twenty-seven of these counties provided estimated amounts for the funding sources they used, totaling $6,216,921. The remaining 18 counties (of the 45 reporting use of additional funds) reported funding sources but not specific dollar amounts. A list of additional funding sources as reported by the County Commissions is provided in Appendix B.

Current funding levels are not adequate to provide needed services to children and their families.

Estimating Costs of Service per Child - For children served under fee for service, the actual expenditures per child are available from the Trails data system. The average cost, then, represents the actual cost per child, summed and divided by the total number of children served. Because individual actual costs are unavailable for fixed-rate contract or county provided services, those average costs per child are derived by estimating a cost per child per day, multiplied by the average length of service. These procedures are more fully explained in the Evaluation Methodology section.

Table II: Proportion of Expenditures vs. Proportion of Services Recorded

	Average Cost per Child Over Entire Course of Core Services Episode
Fixed Rate Contracts	$4,081 per child
County Provided Services	$3,130 per child
Fee for Service Contracts	$2,615 per child

Core Services Outcomes

Data analyzed for this report indicate that the Core Services program is making strides toward fulfilling its mission. In pursuit of this mission, the Core Services program provides direct services to maintain children safely in the home while building the skills and resources of caregivers. When it is in the best interests of the child to be placed out of the home, the Core Services program intends to serve the child in the least restrictive setting possible and, if

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appropriate, to return that child home as quickly as possible or secure a less restrictive permanent placement.

Three overarching measures of program effectiveness are examined for this report:
1) **Successful completion of services** -- the positive disposition of the child's case at the time Core Service delivery ends;
2) **Serving children in the home or in the least restrictive setting possible** – lowering the incidence and length of out of home placement during service delivery and after Core Services end; and
3) **Child safety** – lowering the incidence of child abuse and neglect during service delivery and after Core Services end.

Successful Completion of Core Services - The successful completion of a Core Service episode is examined through Leave Reasons as entered into the Trails data system. Leave Reasons are entered by the case worker as a description of the disposition of a case at the time each authorization for service ends. There are many possible reasons for ending services. For this report, Leave Reasons are divided into three categories: positive, negative and neutral Leave Reasons. As shown below, 45% of discharges in 2008-09 were positive, 20% were neutral and 17% were negative Leave Reasons. Seventeen percent (17%) were entered as "other". The table below summarizes leave reasons; for more detail and a county-by-county breakdown please refer to the full report.

Table III: Leave Reasons: SFY 2008-09 Discharge Cohort (Unduplicated Count)

Leave Reason	Unduplicated Children	Percent
Positive Leave Reasons	**5622**	**45.6%**
In Home-Case Successfully Closed	3055	24.8%
In Home without Service Follow-up	1232	10.0%
In Home Follow-up with Additional Core	1335	10.8%
"Neutral" Leave Reasons	**2486**	**20.2%**
Administrative	678	5.5%
Child/Family Moved	326	2.6%
Client Health Issue	31	0.3%
Closed upon Assessment	887	7.2%
Transfer to New Service or Provider/Type	564	4.6%
Negative Leave Reasons	**2121**	**17.2%**
Family Refused/Inactive/Failed to Comply	928	7.5%
OOH Placement[2]	1093	8.9%
Runaway	100	0.8%
Other	**2098**	**17.0%**
Total	**12,327**	**100%**

[2] Please note that an out of home placement may be the most appropriate and least restrictive option for a child and it is therefore not a negative outcome for that child. For purposes of cost effectiveness out of home placement is considered a negative outcome due to associated increased cost.

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Successfully Maintaining Children in the Home - A central goal of the Core Services program is to keep children and families together by serving children who are at risk for out of home placement in the home, whenever appropriate and possible. Nearly all children with discharges in SFY 2008-09 who were at home at the time Core Services began were maintained in their home during their Core Service episodes. Overall, only 7 percent of these children were placed out of the home during their service episode. In addition, children who received Core Services were less likely to experience an out of home placement during the 12 months following discharge from services. Moreover, data suggest that receiving more services was related to reduced risk of out of home placement.

Overall, 93% of children served through Core Services were maintained at home during their service episode.

Of children who began Core Services in an out of home placement, nearly two thirds moved to a less restrictive setting during their service episode.

Serving Children in the Least Restrictive Setting. - Of those children discharged during the fiscal year, twenty percent (20%) were in an out of home placement on the date they began Core Services. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of these children left the out of home placement and moved to a less restrictive setting (including returning home) during their Core Services episode.

Cost-Savings for Core Services: Reduced Out of Home Placement Days - Examining the number of days in out of home placements in the 12 months prior to Core Services, versus out of home placement days during the 12 months following services, offers a preliminary indicator of possible cost efficiencies associated with Core Services. Table IV, below, shows the average length of stay (LOS) in out of home placements during the 12 months prior and 12 months following Core Services. It also estimates the associated number of days placed out of home with the number of children placed.

Table IV: Estimated Out of Home Placement Days, Before and After Core Service Episode

	FY 2007-08 Discharge Cohort	
	12 Months Pre-Core Services[3]	12 Months Post-Core Services
Number of children (unduplicated) with an out of home placement	5,947	2,528
Average LOS of placement	141 days	66 days

Multiplying the average length of stay by the number of children with placements during this period provides an estimate of how many days of out of home placement occur for this sample of children before and after their Core Services episode.

In light of the high costs associated with out of home placements, the reduction in out of home placements points to a significant cost savings. Multiplying the number

Available data point to a reduction in out of home placements for

of children with an out of home placement in the 12 months prior to the episode (n=5,947) by the average number of days an individual child was placed out of home during those 12 months (141 days), one sees that

children served through Core Services, suggesting significant cost savings.

[3] In order to account for the smaller overall amount of time available post-Core Services (a maximum of 12 months, ending on June 30, 2009), the average LOS computation for pre-Core out of home placements assumed a begin date of no earlier than July 1, 2006 (one year prior to the beginning of the fiscal year).

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838,527 days were spent in out of home placement. When comparing that to the reduced number of children that experience an out of home placement after their Core Service episode (n=2,528) as well as to the lower average number of days in that placement (66 days), the total number of days in out of home placement is reduced by 166,848 days.

Observations and Recommendations

Observations

The Core Services Program is Working – Data analyzed and presented in this report tell us that the Core Services Program is successfully addressing its mission to strengthen Colorado families and keep children and families together. Based on the range of information available to this evaluation, the Core Services Program is functioning as intended, serving the children and families targeted by the authorizing legislation and providing appropriate services and support.

The Core Services Program is successfully serving the children and families of Colorado.

One specific indication of success is that, overall, children are being maintained in their homes while participating in Core Services. Only seven percent (7%) of children were placed out of home during their Core Service episode. A similarly small percentage of children (8%) had Core Services that ended due to an out of home placement.

Another indicator of success is that 85 percent of children served did not return for additional services in the 12 months after their Core Services episode ended. In addition, the number of children placed out of home in the 12 months after participation in Core Services declined from 49 to 21 percent.

Need for Greater Integration of Risk and Needs Assessment with Case Planning– The Core Services Program serves children who have complex and often multiple risk factors for out of home placement. Currently, the general level and type of risk is recorded in the Imminent Risk Section of the Family Services Plan by the child's caseworker, and the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) is used in Child Protection Cases. However, the Program does not require a comprehensive, empirically validated risk and needs assessment tool to guide placement and case planning decisions for all children. Effective tools, like the NCFAS or the Child and Adolescent Strengths and Needs (CANS) can gauge not only the child's level of risk, but also the degree of risk and the specific areas where services are needed to mitigate that risk and support safety and stability. Program-wide use of a standardized, validated risk and

needs assessment in case planning would support consistent decisions regarding the intensity and restrictiveness, as well as types, of services. This would allow more consistent matching of services to child and family needs and enhance quality assurance and evaluation efforts.

Reported Decrease in the Number of Children Served – Data point to a slight decline in the number of children served and the number of service authorizations recorded in Trails over the past two years. One possible explanation is that workload increases have resulted in less data being entered into the statewide data system, thereby undercounting the actual number of children being served. It is possible that children with less severe needs have been diverted from Core Services and served through community partnerships like Collaborative Management. Another possibility is that more comprehensive, evidence based services and promising practices are being provided so that the same amount of resources are used to serve

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fewer children but with more intensive services. However, without a comprehensive approach to risk and needs assessment that drives planning, along with consistent data entry, a definitive statement cannot be made. Core Services Program Coordinators will be engaging in discussions over the coming months to explore this issue.

Challenges of Cost Calculations – Costs per child remain difficult to determine due to inconsistent data entry into Trails and variance in the methods of service payment practices across counties (fee for service, fixed rate contracts, county provided). Consistent data entry practices across counties would allow for accurate estimates of costs per child and cost comparisons across multiple factors.

Challenges in Rural Communities – Challenges faced by Core Services Program Commissions in the many rural and frontier communities of Colorado are significant. These include finding and retaining qualified providers, particularly for evidence based services and promising practices; maintaining access to specialized services (e.g., multilingual/multicultural providers, sexual abuse treatment) when the need from year to year is unpredictable; and limited access and increased expense because of long distances between communities. Lack of transportation remains a primary challenge (also noted by urban counties as a challenge).

Recommendations

We recommend that Trails data experts are utilized to investigate potential data system and data entry improvements to increase consistency across counties regarding the children and services entered into Trails. Consistent data entry is a necessary prerequisite to understanding costs, effectiveness and cost savings of the Core Services Program.

We recommend that the Core Services Program Coordinators and leadership continue to explore the integration of an empirically validated risk and needs assessment tool into all case planning decisions. Tools like the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (used in Colorado in Child Protection Cases) or the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment (CANS) are used in many states to support responsive case planning that matches service intensity and restrictiveness to child and family risk levels while also matching specific service types to the identified needs of children and their families. This comprehensive approach to risk and needs assessment supports consistency in matching services to child and family needs and provides

valid data for program monitoring and improvement as well as evaluation and reporting.

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Background and Introduction

The Core Services Program was established within the Colorado Department of Human Services in 1994 and is statutorily mandated to provide strength-based resources and support to families when children are at imminent risk of out of home placement and/or in need of services to maintain a least restrictive setting.

The Colorado Revised Statute (C.R.S.) section authorizing the Core Services Program also mandates that the Department annually provide ". . . an evaluation of the overall effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the program and any recommended changes to such program." This report is prepared in response to this mandate and to provide meaningful decision support for DCW and county Core Services programs.

Goals

With this mandate in mind, the Program has four broad goals:

1. Focus on family strengths by directing intensive services that support and strengthen the family and protect the child;
2. Prevent out of home placement;
3. Return children in placement to their own home; or unite children with their permanent families.
4. Provide services that protect the child.

Flexible Local Implementation

The four goals listed above are the foundation for the Core Services Program. From this foundation, each of 64 counties and both Colorado tribes develop locally meaningful guiding principles and service opportunities. Each jurisdiction provides a unique set of required and locally-specific services resulting in a multifaceted pattern of successes and implementation challenges across the state. In addition, policies guiding documentation of services and expenditures differ from county to county. However, each county and tribe shares a common

mission to support the children and families of its communities and has the desire and obligation to deliver services that are meaningful to the families that receive them while remaining accountable to all citizens in the community. To support accountability and to ultimately enhance the Core Services Program, this evaluation embraces the diversity of Core Services implementation across the state. This diversity presents opportunities to find commonalities across effective strategies, share information about successes and how cost efficiencies can be achieved, and use local experiences to strengthen the overall state program.

Focus on Outcomes

It is the intent of the Division of Child Welfare (DCW) to examine and report the effectiveness of the Core Services Program with a primary focus on outcomes for Colorado's children. This year's report introduces the use of cohort groups for the first time to explore outcomes in more detail. Each subsequent year will build on this foundation to provide more useful and specific outcomes information that will help move toward a comprehensive, outcomes-driven evaluation of the Core Services Program. Additional information regarding the cohort approach is provided in the Evaluation Methods section.

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Context of the Current Report

Commissions & County Commission Reports

Family Preservation Commissions represent the heart of the Core Services Program. These Commissions are local interdisciplinary, multi-agency committees responsible for evaluating the family preservation program and making recommendations for change at the local level and at the state level through an annual report. These commissions were established in statute during the 1993-1994 legislative session. C.R.S. 26-5.5-106 sets forth the composition and duties of the commissions as follows:

1) "The governing body of each county or city and county shall establish a family preservation commission for the county or city and county to carry out the duties described in subsection (2) of this section. The commission shall be interdisciplinary and multi-agency in composition, except that such commission shall include at least two members from the public at-large. The governing body may designate an existing board or group to act as the commission. A group of counties may agree to designate a regional commission to act collectively as the commission for all such counties.

2) It shall be the duty of each commission established or designated pursuant to subsection (1) of this section to hold periodic meetings and evaluate the family preservation program within the county or city and county, and to identify any recommended changes to such program. On or after July 1, 1994, the commission shall submit an annual report to the executive director of the state department. The report shall consist of an evaluation of the overall effectiveness and cost-efficiency of the program and any recommended changes to such program. The report shall be submitted on or before the first day of September of each year."

Not all counties are required to have a Family Preservation Commission. However, those

counties that do not have a commission are required to spend all of their Core Services 80/20 funding on purchased or contracted services (not county provided services) as directed in the Colorado Children's Code (19-1-116, 1.5). Fifty- three (53) of the 64 counties and one tribal nation (Southern Ute) reported that they have a Family Preservation Commission and provided a membership list as part of their annual report.

Regardless of whether a county has a Family Preservation Commission, each is required to submit an annual Family Preservation/Core Services Report. All 64 counties and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe submitted annual reports directly to TriWest Group (the contracted program evaluator). Data from those reports is incorporated into this evaluation to provide county-specific context to the quantitative findings. Copies of each county or tribal report are available by request from the Division of Child Welfare.

Family Preservation Services

A subsection of the legislation mandating the Family Preservation Commissions defines "family preservation services" as assistance that focuses on a family's strengths and empowers a family by providing alternative problem-solving techniques, child-rearing practices and responses to living situations creating stress for the family. This includes resources that are available to supplement existing informal support systems for the family. This collection of services makes up the Core Services Program.

Historically, the annual report has been submitted by the Division of Child Welfare, in compliance with the above statute, and has represented a compilation of the individual county Core Services/Family Preservation Commission reports submitted each year to the Division.

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The evaluation approach and report content has changed in recent years with increased emphasis on evidence based services and promising practices within the state and child welfare services, and as the statewide Colorado Trails Case Management System (Trails) has provided access to more systematic and detailed quantitative data regarding children and families served by the Core Services Program.

Scope of the Current Report

This report marks the second year of a multi-phased evaluation approach developed by TriWest Group in partnership with the Division of Child Welfare and informed by the state and local leadership of the Core Services Program. This year's report establishes three general cohorts of children served by the Core Services Program. These cohorts are the foundation of a longitudinal outcome analysis that will continue to evolve over the coming years and that can be used to quantitatively 1) assess the implementation of Core Services in relation to the statutory mandates of providing services to families with children at imminent risk of out of home placement and/or children in need of services to maintain them in the least restrictive setting; 2) highlight program outcomes based upon the four main goals for program effectiveness; and 3) explore potential cost efficiencies

Core Services Goals

1. Focus on family strengths by directing intensive services that support and strengthen the family and protect the child;
2. Prevent out of home placement;
3. Return children in placement to their own home; or unite children with their permanent families.
4. Provide services that protect the child.

associated with the delivery of Core Services. These initial cohorts will allow the evaluation, across annual reporting periods, to follow the progress of the Core Services Program in making the right services available at the right time to children and families at risk, in implementing intensive services that support and strengthen families, and to track service effectiveness by examining outcomes for cohorts of children as they leave the Core Services Program.

As the evaluation continues to evolve and additional data in Trails becomes available or is identified for use in these analyses, we expect that the cohort groups can be further divided based on the risk and need areas, as well as their placement status prior to and during their participation in Core Services. This year's report represents a first step in this direction by looking at the cohort of children who began receiving Core Services during this fiscal year. Additional details are included in the Evaluation Methods section.

The purpose of this evaluation is to provide stakeholders with actionable information on both the successes and opportunities for improvements within the Core Services Program. Long-term evaluation objectives include additional analysis and reporting on longitudinal data on safety, permanency and well-being outcomes. In addition, we look forward to identifying a group of children and families not receiving Core Services that would be appropriate for a comparative analysis of program effects and cost efficiencies.

> The ultimate purpose of this evaluation is to provide stakeholders with actionable information on both the successes and opportunities for improvements for the Core Services Program.

As we move towards the next step in this evaluation process, this year's report has four objectives:

- To describe the implementation of the Core Services Program. This includes a description of the risks and needs of children and families at risk of out of home

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placement and/or in need of services to maintain the least restrictive setting served by the program, and descriptions of the services provided to support and strengthen families.

- To continue the effort to address requirements specified by the Legislative State Audit in May 2007 to develop a method to calculate an accurate cost per child that can be used to compare the costs and benefits of the Core Services Program.

- To report on 12 month outcomes for the State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2007-2008 discharge cohort (children who ended a Core Services episode during SFY 2007-2008). These outcomes include: reengagement with Core Services, changes in assessed risk for out of home placement, the ability to maintain children in the home (examining the occurrence and length of out of home placement), and maintaining children safely in the home.

- To describe county-specific implementation challenges and opportunities in order to 1) provide context for the quantitative descriptions of children served and services provided, and 2) to highlight specific positive county experiences and suggest ways to address challenges experienced by local communities.

Structure of the Current Report

Following this Background and Introduction section is **Evaluation Methods**. This section provides a brief presentation of the evaluation methods used in developing and presenting this report. This includes data sources and dates of collection, as well as the general assumptions and parameters for analysis, organized by each subsequent section of the report.

The next section of the report is **Implementation of the Core Services Program**. This section describes the outputs and activities of the Core Services Program, including services used by counties and specific gaps and barriers to accessing services. The section includes a discussion of characteristics, risk factors and needs of the children and families served by the programs. It also provides a general overview of the distribution of services across the state. This description includes an overall view of the Core Services Program as well as county-level data.

The next section of the report discusses the **Comparative Costs of Core Services**. Total costs and average costs per child are presented based on type of service and are broken down by services provided based on payment types (fee for service contracts, fixed rate contracts, and county provided services). The nature and reason for these breakdowns is explained briefly in the Evaluation Methods section and more thoroughly in Comparative Costs of Core Services section.

The **Program Effectiveness section** describes observed outcomes for children who terminated Core Services during the last fiscal year (SFY 2007-2008), including returns for additional service, maintaining children in the home/out of home placements, and/or least restrictive setting. The report focuses on outcomes for children served *last* year so that 12 months of data post-services are available.

The final section of the report presents a brief discussion of **Observations and Recommendations** from this year's report.

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Evaluation Methods

Data Sources

Data for this report comes from four primary sources:

1. Colorado Trails Case Management System (commonly referred to as Trails) – Extracts from Trails are the primary source of data for this report. These extracts include information regarding the children served, the types and lengths of services provided, service outcomes (leave reasons), child placement history, and reports of child abuse and neglect. Trails is a dynamic case management system in which users can update, add, and delete records on an ongoing basis as new information becomes available or as errors are discovered and corrected. The SFY 2008-2009 data for this report reflects what was in the Trails system as of July 27, 2009.

The Division of Child Welfare continues to enhance Trails in order to provide the most accurate information possible. Most notably, an enhancement to the Service Authorization includes new Leave Reason options which capture more detail regarding the disposition of a child's case at the time a specific treatment episode ends. This and other changes to Trails have made a much larger and more comprehensive data set available for analysis and reporting. Continued efforts to improve the system promise even more useable information from Trails for future reporting, thereby supporting the Core Services Program in its ongoing commitment to developing more effective quality assurance and evaluation approaches over time.

Colorado is a state supervised, county administered state. Therefore, Trails data entry practices across counties differ.

Colorado has a state supervised, county administered Child Welfare system. Statewide policy and training dictate that every child receiving a service be entered into Trails. Due to differences in county policies, it has been reported that not every child who benefits from services is entered. The number of children entered into Trails is known to be lower than the actual number of children served because of differences in data entry practices across counties. This issue is discussed more fully in the Evaluation Methods and Comparative Costs of Core Services sections.

2. Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Reports – Each county or sovereign tribal nation (except where exempt) is required by state statute to complete a Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Report. For the past two years counties have sent these reports directly to TriWest Group (the contracted program evaluator) for analysis and inclusion in the annual program evaluation report (please see Appendix A for a template of the county report). Family Preservation/Core Services Commissions and Tribal leaders were asked to respond to specific questions regarding the services available in their community, program successes and challenges, recommendations for changes to the Core Services Program, and additional funding sources. The Commission report gives counties the opportunity to supplement data from Trails with qualitative information that helps tell the story behind the numbers. Individual county reports are available from the Division of Child Welfare.

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3. Colorado Financial Management System (CFMS) – Provides the total actual expenditures for the Core Services Program, for the entire state and for individual counties.

Describing Children Served and Types of Services

Trails is the primary source of data regarding children served and the types and number of services delivered. Differences across counties in the use of the Trails system result in noticeable limitations in the data presented in this report (please see the Evaluation Methods and Comparative Cost of Core Services sections for details). For this reason, data must be

interpreted with caution and reminders of specific limitations will be inserted occasionally in the Outcomes Section of this report.

Numbers of children served and types of services provided by each county are derived from Trails data and represent an unduplicated count of children served in each county; each child is counted one time, regardless of how many different services were received. Every child receiving *any* core service in SFY 2008-2009 (July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009) is included in this count.

For this report, children served are described based on several key factors including time periods of involvement in Core Services, child and family risk level and permanency goals. Each of these constructs is introduced briefly below.

Time Periods for Involvement
Children are divided into three main cohorts based on time periods for involvement in Core Services as follows:

1. **SFY 09 Children Served** - all children who began their service episode prior to June 30, 2009 (end of SFY 2008-2009).
2. **SFY 09 New Services Cohort** - children served in SFY 2008-2009 who began a distinct service episode[4] during the fiscal year.
3. **SFY 08 Discharge[5] Cohort** - children who ended a distinct service episode during SFY 2007-2008 and did not return to service within two months (62 days)[6].
4. **SFY 09 Discharge Cohort** - children who ended a distinct service episode during SFY 2008-2009 and did not return to service within two months (62 days).

New Services Cohort
The new services cohort (children who began new service episodes this year) is used to examine level of risk and needs as well as children's Core Services histories. Because of recent improvements in Trails, this analysis cannot extend back to children who began

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[4] A distinct service episode is defined as an array of Core Service authorizations that begins at the time the required imminent risk assessment is completed in the Trails data system (and there are no previous authorizations within 62 days) and ends once the last service authorization concludes (and there are no subsequent authorizations within 62 days). A distinct service episode can be comprised of multiple service authorizations.

[5] Discharge is defined as the end of a distinct Core Service episode (as defined above) without return to service within two months (62 days).

[6] The two month (62 day) time period was determined, in consultation with Core Services coordinators, to be a reasonable length of time to assume that a service episode had actually ended (as opposed to a case where services are continuing, but a new authorization has not yet been entered into Trails).

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receiving services in prior fiscal years, but will be limited to this first, SFY 2008-2009 New Services Cohort.

SFY 08 Discharge Cohort
The SFY 08 discharge cohort of children from the previous state fiscal year (2007-2008) is used in this report to examine 12 month outcomes for children served by Core Services.

SFY 09 Discharge Cohort

The SFY 09 discharge cohort is used to examine more immediate outcomes including maintaining in home placements, returns to service and leave reasons.

Risk Factors

Risk factors for out of home placement are extracted from the caseworker risk assessment reports completed in the Family Service Plan (FSP), Section 3A. Risk data is presented for the SFY09 New Service Cohort only, not for all children served, because this data extraction is new for this fiscal year.

Permanency Goals

Permanency goals were extracted from their respective data tables in Trails. In matching permanency goals to children served, the goal entered closest to the date that the SFY09 service episode began was used as the permanency goal for that child at the time of services.

Describing Core Services Implementation

The number of actual service units delivered reflects a duplicated count of children. In other words, a single child may be counted multiple times, once for each service received. All services authorized in Trails in SFY 2008-2009 are included in the count. Frequency distributions and means (averages) are used to describe child characteristics and service units.

Information from county and tribal Family Preservation/ Core Services Commission Reports is used throughout this report. For example, types of services used in each county are summarized in the Program Overview Section and frequency of service availability is included in Appendix B. These Commission Reports also provide contextual data for the Outcomes Section and additional details regarding how counties acquire additional funds to meet the needs of their communities. In addition, information is collected on specific program accomplishments, county collaborative efforts, evidence based practices, and recommendations for changes to the Core Services Program. Commission reports comment on local factors driving higher costs of services and other factors that promote cost efficiencies or cost savings. Most of the data presented from counties is qualitative and summarized in narrative form. Where possible and appropriate, frequency distributions are used to describe county implementation efforts. Please see Appendix A for the template for this year's Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Reports.

> County Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Reports provide much of the information used to describe services to children and families across the state.

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Describing Costs of the Core Services Program

As stated previously, county practices vary in the ways in which data is entered into Trails. This

may lead to an unknown undercount of services provided and makes cost estimates per child and per service difficult to determine. Services delivered by the Core Services Program can be paid for in three different ways: 1) "fee for service" contract with a private provider, 2) "fixed rate contract" with a private provider, or 3) provided directly by the county. In some cases counties may set up a fee for service or fixed rate contract in order to pay for services provided by another county.

When there is a fee for service contract in place, the provider is paid for each individual service provided to a specific child (or family, on behalf of the child). In order to process payment, each service must be entered into Trails. Costs for fee for service units are recorded in Trails by individual child. Therefore, an actual cost per child can be calculated under the fee for service payment structure.

Under a fixed rate contract, however, the provider receives a fixed payment per month to provide a standard service across multiple children and families. In these cases, in order to process payment, only one service unit for one child needs to be entered. Some counties choose to enter all children served within each family and some counties do not, primarily because of the significant workload required to do so.

In cases where the county provides a service directly, no payment is being made, so the system does not require detailed service information. However, counties are trained and mandated to enter all Core Services they provide. As previously stated, actual practices for entering this data vary from county to county.

Calculating costs under fixed rate contracts
Under fixed rate contracts, the total amount expended on the contract is known. In order to estimate an average cost per child, the following method was used:

- The number of days for each service authorization entered under a fixed rate contract was calculated by subtracting the service authorization start date from the end date. Only days occurring in this fiscal year were counted – if the start and end dates were not within the scope of the fiscal year, then the dates July 1, 2008 and June 30, 2009 were used.
- In cases where the service started and ended on the same day, it was calculated as one day.
- The total number of days of service for each child was then calculated by adding all of the service authorizations for each child.
- The total number of days of service delivered for a county was calculated by adding the service days for all children served.
- Total fixed rate contract expenditures were divided by the total number of children's service days in order to compute a daily cost for one individual child. The daily per child cost was then multiplied by the average length of service (LOS) in order to estimate an average cost per child.

Because not all services or all children who received services are recorded, it is likely that the average estimated cost per child presented here is higher than the actual cost.

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When services are provided by the county, no cost data is recorded in Trails. However, service information is frequently available. County-provided service costs were estimated by taking the total amount of the Core Services Expenditures and subtracting the fee for service amounts and fixed rate contracts. Average costs per child were estimated using the same procedure as with fixed rate contracts, described above.

The Colorado Financial Management System (CFMS) data provided the total Core Services Program Expenditures for each county and for the state as a whole.

In addition to average costs, this section of the report discusses spending overages for the Core Services Program as well as additional funding sources used by counties to address additional needs in the Core Services budget.

Describing Program Effectiveness: Core Services Outcomes

Three main pieces of information are used to describe Core Services outcomes: successful completion of services, maintaining children in the home, and reducing the incidence and length of future out of home placements. Child safety is another important facet of the Core Services Program. More outcomes regarding safety, in addition to permanency, will be included in next year's evaluation report.

Discharge from Core Services is currently captured as the Leave Reason recorded in Trails at the time a service authorization ends. The possible "pick list" of Leave Reasons is shown below, mapped to variables used in the analysis.

Table 1: Leave Reasons used in Analyses matched with "Pick List" from Trails

General Leave Reason used in Analysis	Trails Pick List
Positive Reasons	
In Home-Case Successfully Closed	In Home-Case Successfully Closed
	Family Preservation Success
In Home without Service Follow-up	In Home without Service Follow-up
In Home Follow-up with Additional Core	In Home Follow-up with Additional Core
Negative Reasons	
	Client refused service
Family Refused/Inactive/Failed to Comply	Inactive Core Service
	Parents failed to provide adequate safety
OOH Placement	Out of Home Placement
	Out of Home with another Core Service
Runaway	Runaway
Neutral Reasons	
	Business Office Correction
	Case Transferred To Another County
Administrative	Contract Expired
	Opened in Error
	Payee Wrong Code
	Provider Closed
Child/Family Moved	Moved out of County/Agency/State
Client Health Issue	Death
	Hospitalization
Closed upon Assessment	Closed upon Assessment
Transfer to New Service or Provider/Type	Same Provider/Same Service
	Same Service Type/New Provider
Other	Other

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Leave Reasons are reported for children in the SFY 09 discharge cohort, meaning their array of Core Services (each defined as an episode) ended during this fiscal year. Because children often had multiple authorizations during a single episode, the Leave Reason associated with the last service authorization is used to describe the disposition of the child's case at the time services ended.

Maintaining Children in the Home is defined as the avoidance of an out of home placement occurring during the Core Services episode. Proportions of children maintained in the home are derived from identifying children who do NOT have an out of home placement which begins in between the Core Services start and end dates.

Return to Core Services for purposes of this report is defined as a new Core Service authorization occurring in Trails at least two months (62 days) after the Core Service episode has ended. Any new authorization occurring in less than two months would be considered a continuation of that episode and not a return to service. The two month (62 day) time period was determined, in consultation with Core Services coordinators, to be a reasonable length of time to assume that a service episode had actually ended (as opposed to a case where services are continuing, but a new authorization has not yet been entered into Trails).

Program Overview

Core Services Provided by Counties and Tribal Programs

Core Services funding is allocated individually to each of the 64 Colorado Counties and, as of SFY 2006-2007, to the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SFY 2006-2007 was the first year this tribe participated in the Core Services Program)[7]. The purpose of this funding is to provide "family preservation services," defined in statute (C.R.S. 26-5.5-103) as assistance that focuses on a family's strengths and empowers a family by providing alternative problem-solving techniques, child-rearing practices and responses to living situations creating stress for the family. This includes resources that are available to supplement existing informal support systems for the family. The array of services used by counties in support of family preservation makes up the Core Services Program.

For simplicity, this report uses the term "county" as inclusive of both counties and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. Just as each county faces unique opportunities and challenges so does the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, including local family needs, regional and ethnic cultural needs and unique local government policies and priorities.

Within the parameters provided by statute, each locality determines which services to provide based on community need and resource availability. All counties are required to provide access to all of the Core Services specified in statute, although services are delivered according to local need. Core Services include eight distinct services and a ninth category called "county designed services" created to meet specific local needs. After Care is the only core service which is not required to be in the annual plan since funds are not specifically designated for the provision of the service and because any of the other core services may be used as an After Care service. For this reason After Care services are not reported on separately.

The following table shows the percentage of counties that utilized each type of service during SFY 2008-2009. Please see Appendix B for a detailed description of each type of Core Service as well as a discussion of general availability throughout the state.

Table 2: Core Services Utilization by Counties and Tribal Areas

Core Service Type	Percent of Counties Using[8]	Core Service Type	Percent of Counties Using[9]
Mental Health Services	93%	County Designed Services	69%
Substance Abuse Treatment	88%	Life Skills	67%
Intensive Family Therapy	80%	Day Treatment	51%
Special Economic Assistance	79%	Sexual Abuse Treatment	51%
Home-Based Services	71%		

[7] Both the Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Ute Mountain Indian Tribe are eligible to participate in the Core Services Program. Currently, the Southern Ute Indian Tribe is the only one participating.
[8] Based on whether at least one service authorization of the Core Services type was entered into Trails by that county.
[9] Based on whether at least one service authorization of the Core Services type was entered into Trails by that county.

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Program Changes and Core Service Allocations for SFY 2008-2009

Table 3 shows total Core Services allocations for SFY 2008-2009. An additional 1.5% Cost Of Living Adjustment (COLA) was earmarked for providers of the Core Services Program and allocated to the 80/20 funding line based on each county's existing 80/20 funding base (see the following section for details on 80/20 funding). The totals in the table below include the additional COLA.

Table 3: SFY 2008-2009 Core Services Program Allocations

County	Core Services Grand Total	County	Core Services Grand Total
Adams	$ 4,861,372	Kiowa	$ 53,097
Alamosa	$ 676,581	Kit Carson	$ 126,824
Arapahoe	$ 4,415,566	Lake	$ 143,252
Archuleta	$ 260,750	La Plata/San Juan	$ 1,063,363
Baca	$ 42,699	Larimer	$ 1,717,609
Bent	$ 87,297	Las Animas	$ 299,025
Boulder	$ 2,566,021	Lincoln	$ 356,672
Broomfield	$ 340,589	Logan	$ 364,204
Chaffee	$ 299,241	Mesa	$ 1,235,690
Cheyenne	$ 38,598	Moffat	$ 469,189
Clear Creek	$ 126,628	Montezuma	$ 313,478
Conejos	$ 127,104	Montrose	$ 477,509
Costilla	$ 81,269	Morgan	$ 658,965
Crowley	$ 27,161	Otero	$ 459,933
Custer	$ 26,128	Ouray/San Miguel	$ 255,973
Delta	$ 400,887	Park	$ 171,968
Denver	$ 7,857,815	Phillips	$ 39,059
Dolores	$ 30,007	Pitkin	$ 34,825
Douglas	$ 218,716	Prowers	$ 336,837
Eagle	$ 113,481	Pueblo	$ 1,324,407
Elbert	$ 292,271	Rio Blanco	$ 118,012
El Paso	$ 5,328,628	Rio Grande/Mineral	$ 74,791
Fremont	$ 793,370	Routt	$ 322,332
Garfield	$ 457,584	Saguache	$ 91,121
Gilpin	$ 85,108	Sedgwick	$ 32,050
Grand	$ 175,902	Summit	$ 229,373
Gunnison/Hinsdale	$ 83,207	Teller	$ 523,936
Huerfano	$ 140,834	Washington	$ 103,339
Jackson	$ 26,467	Weld	$ 1,466,880
Jefferson	$ 4,077,279	Yuma	$ 245,589
State Total	**$ 47,167,867**		

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Evidence Based Service Awards

The $4,088,723 earmarked specifically for Core Services Program evidence based services to adolescents was continued this year. These additional funds were allocated to counties through a request for applications (RFA) process. These funds are considered a strong asset to the Core Services Program as counties continue to serve an increased number of Colorado's adolescents. In addition, these funds have become essential to the sustainability of evidence based services and promising practices in Colorado. Please see Appendix C for background information on the evidence based services allocation. The SFY 2008-2009 evidence based services to adolescent awards are shown in Table 4, presented by county, amount of approved award, and the approved evidence based service program.

Table 4: Evidence Based Service Awards

County Department	Award Offered	Evidence Based Service Program
Adams	$ 292,897	Youth Intervention Program
Alamosa	$ 63,837	Intensive Mentoring Project
Arapahoe (1)	$ 241,375	Multisystemic Therapy – Savio
Arapahoe (2)	$ 329,970	Direct Link/Multisystemic Therapy – Synergy
Archuleta	$ 83,970	Moral Recognition Therapy and Responsibility Training
Broomfield	$ 56,707	Multisystemic Therapy
Chafee	$ 98,147	Mentoring
Conejos	$ 62,436	Mentoring
Costilla	$ 39,514	Intensive Mentoring Project
Denver	$ 226,173	Multisystemic Therapy
Elbert (1)	$ 57,600	Multisystemic Therapy
Elbert (2)	$ 99,435	Family Coaching/Youth Mentoring
El Paso	$ 248,639	Multisystemic Therapy
Fremont	$ 92,991	Functional Family Therapy
Garfield	$ 22,427	Adolescent Mediation Services
Gunnison/Hinsdale	$ 39,186	Family and Youth Mentoring
Huerfano	$ 11,938	Reconnecting Youth
Jefferson (1)	$ 356,461	Multisystemic Therapy
Jefferson (2)	$ 68,340	Team Decision Making
Kit Carson	$ 19,629	Functional Family Therapy
La Plata/San Juan/ Montezuma, Dolores/Archuleta	$ 151,298	Adolescent Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
La Plata/San Juan	$ 162,935	Multisystemic Therapy
Larimer (1)	$ 119,892	Family Group Conferencing
Larimer (2)	$ 76,941	NYPUM National Youth Program Using Mini-Bikes
Mesa (1)	$ 125,245	Rapid Response
Mesa (2)	$ 165,277	Day Treatment to Adolescents
Montrose	$ 64,995	Promoting Healthy Adolescent Trends (PHAT)
Pueblo	$ 182,605	For Keeps Program

Summit	$ 21,810	Mentor Supported Substance Abuse Treatment
Teller	$ 115,159	Multisystemic Therapy
Weld (1)	$ 302,129	Teamwork, Innovation, Growth, Hope and Training (TIGHT)
Weld (2)	$ 88,765	Multisystemic Therapy
Total Award Allocation	**$4,088,723**	

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The additional evidence based programs for adolescents are considered county designed Core Services. All county designed data pulled from Trails includes these additional evidence based programs. The Division of Child Welfare will continue to work with each Core Services Program Coordinator to ensure projected outcome data is compiled and the goal of each program is achieved.

To continue to receive an evidence based services award, Core Services Coordinators need to submit a complete program needs assessment, service description and projected outcomes. They must also document historical outcomes showing how these specific county designed services reduce the need for higher costs of more restrictive settings or residential services.

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Implementation of the Core Services Program

Children and Families Served (Statewide and by County)

Children Served During SFY 2008-2009
Children eligible to receive Core Services are either at imminent risk of being placed out of home or in need of services to move to or maintain the least restrictive setting. This refers to children who, without immediate intervention, services, and support would very likely have been removed from the home and placed under local county or tribal custody. Children also receive services to reunify or maintain a safe and stable placement in the least restrictive setting. Counties assess and determine which services will best meet the needs of each child and family. It is important to note that services are often delivered not only to the individual child, but also to other family members, including caregivers, on behalf of the child in order to safely maintain the child in the home. As a result, for the remainder of the report, references to "children served" or "services received by children" refers to all services – those delivered directly to the child and those delivered to other family members on behalf of the child.

Core Services are delivered directly to the child or to caregivers and other family members on behalf of the child – whatever it takes to safely and successfully maintain the child in the home or in the least restrictive setting.

A total of 16,066 children (unduplicated count) were identified in Trails as having received at least one Core Service during SFY 2008-2009. This represents a 9.7% decline over the previous year. A similar decline was observed last fiscal year. At that time the decrease was attributed, at least in part, to differences in methodology between the reports for SFY 2007-2006 and SFY 2007-2008. However, this year's report shows a similar decline despite using a consistent data collection and analysis strategy across the two time periods. An explanation for this decline could be a relatively modest Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase over the past two fiscal years, as well as state budget issues that have affected all departments. It has been noted that the numbers presented here undercount the actual number of children and families served because of county-level variations in data entry practices. It is possible that the declines seen here are more representative of decreases in the amount of data being entered due to personnel and other resource constraints resulting from the current state budget realities

than an actual decrease in the number of children being served. It is also possible that children with less severe needs have been diverted from Core Services and served through community partnerships like Collaborative Management. Another explanation may be that while fewer children are being served they are receiving *more* intensive evidence based/promising practices and/or longer duration of services. A summary of the total count of children served since SFY 2005-2006 is provided in Table 5 on page 16.

Table 6 shows race/ethnicity and gender of the children served. Most children served by the Core Services Program were White, non-Hispanic (49%) or Hispanic (33%). There was a fairly even distribution of girls (46%) and boys (54%) across the children served. The average age of children served by Core Services was 9.2 years.

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Table 5: Total Number of Children Served: Core Services Program

	SFY 2005-06	SFY 2006-07	SFY 2007-08	SFY 2008-09
Total Unduplicated Count	19,006[10]	19,152[11]	17,793	16,066

Table 6: Race/Ethnicity and Gender of Children Served

	Core Services Children Served	
	Number of Children	Percentage
Female	7,448	46.4%
Male	8,618	53.6%
TOTAL	**16,066**	**100.0%**
American Indian or Alaskan Native	52	<1%
Asian	63	<1%
Black or African American	1,673	10.4%
Hispanic	5,215	32.5%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	14	<1%
White (Caucasian)	7,825	48.7%
Multiple Races	780	4.9%
Missing Data or Unable to Determine	**444**	**2.8**
TOTAL	**16,066**	**100.0%**

[10] This number is taken from the SFY 2005-06 Commission Report.
[11] This number is taken from the SFY 2006-07 Commission Report

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Table 7 below shows the distribution of children served across counties.

Table 7: SFY 2008-2009 Unduplicated Children Served[12] by County

County	SFY 09 Children Served		County	SFY09 Children Served	
	Number	**Percent of Total**		**Number**	**Percent of Total**
Adams	929	5.7%	Kit Carson	26	0.2%
Alamosa	186	1.2%	La Plata/San Juan	211	1.3%
Arapahoe	1,397	8.6%	Lake	53	0.3%
Archuleta	85	0.5%	Larimer	1926	11.9%
Baca	1	0.%	Las Animas	55	0.3%
Bent	29	0.2%	Lincoln	41	0.3%
Boulder	733	4.5%	Logan	83	0.5%
Broomfield	101	0.6%	Mesa	386	2.4%
Chaffee	33	0.2%	Moffat	142	0.9%
Cheyenne	2	0.%	Montezuma	126	0.8%
Clear Creek	44	0.3%	Montrose	150	0.9%
Conejos	61	0.4%	Morgan	196	1.2%
Costilla	9	0.1%	Otero	49	0.3%
Crowley	22	0.1%	Ouray/San Miguel	23	0.1%
Custer	5	0.%	Park	52	0.3%
Delta	107	0.7%	Phillips	12	0.1%
Denver	2,808	17.4%	Pitkin	17	0.1%

Dolores	10	0.1% Prowers	84	0.5%
Douglas	96	0.6% Pueblo	788	4.9%
Eagle	62	0.4% Rio Blanco	48	0.3%
El Paso	1,654	10.2% Rio Grande/Mineral	65	0.4%
Elbert	66	0.4% Routt	36	0.2%
Fremont	244	1.5% Saguache	38	0.2%
Garfield	145	0.9% Sedgwick	6	0.%
Gilpin	28	0.2% Summit	43	0.3%
Grand	42	0.3% Teller	147	0.9%
Gunnison/Hins	33	0.2% Washington	28	0.2%
Huerfano	74	0.5% Weld	720	4.5%
Jackson	7	0.% Yuma	36	0.2%
Jefferson	1,558	9.6%		
State Total	**16,066**[13]			

[12]Please note that clients are unduplicated within each county. Some children were served by multiple counties. These children are counted multiple times, one time for each county authorizing service.

[13]County unduplicated counts add up to 16,158 children served because some youth were served by multiple counties. These children count multiple times, once for each county in which they received services.

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Of those children served during this year, 10,558 began new service episodes during the fiscal year. These children make up the **New Services Cohort** used to examine the risks and needs of children and families coming into the Core Services Program for the first time, or returning after having received services in the past. The remaining children served during this state fiscal year have service episodes which began in previous time periods and extended into this state fiscal year. The analysis of Core Services provided will be presented based on either the New Services Cohort or on all children served. This distinction will be detailed in the presentation of findings. Some of the children served ended their services during SFY2008-2009; in addition to "all children served," these children are also included in the SFY 09 discharge cohort.

Risk of Out of Home Placement: New Services Cohort

In order for Core Services to be authorized for a child, the caseworker must document imminent risk for out of home placement and/or the need for services in order to maintain the least restrictive setting in Trails. Risk Assessments completed by caseworkers indicated all children (100%) beginning Core Services during SFY 2008-2009 had at least one risk factor for out of home placement. The specific factors that caseworkers reported varied across children served, and the majority of children (60%) had multiple risk factors. Figure 1, below, shows the distribution of risk factors across children served[14].

The **New Services Cohort** is made up of children who began a new service episode during SFY 2008-09.

Figure 1: Percent of children with one, two to three, or four or more risk factors

Nearly half of all children served had two to three risk factors present. A small proportion (12%) had four or more risk factors present at the time of assessment.

[14] Unduplicated count of all children beginning a new Core Services episode in SFY 2008-2009 (New Services Cohort).

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Figure 2, , below, show   ws the propo   ortion of chil   ldren by type   e of risk fact   tor present in   n the home. Note that   t the percen   tages do no   ot add to 100   0 because m   many children   n have more   e than one fa   actor present a   at the time o   of the risk as   sessment.

Figur re 2: Distrib   bution of Ris   sk Factors   across Chil   ldren Serve   ed

More than 40 percent of children served were at risk for out of home placement due to child abuse or neglect in the home. Parental problems such as substance abuse (37%), mental illness (17%) and domestic violence (14%) also commonly led to a risk of children being placed out of the home. In some cases, the child's behavior led to out of home placement risk, including being labeled "beyond control of parents" (26%), or committing delinquent acts (11%).

The degree of out of home placement risk experienced by Core Services children as reported by caseworkers is generally confirmed by the placement histories of children who began a service episode during SFY 2008-2009. More than half (63%) of these children had a documented out of home placement history at some point in time. Approximately one-third of these children (33%) experienced at least one previous out of home placement within the 12 months prior to the start of their Core Service episode. An additional 12

> Well over half of children served had a history of out of home placement prior to receiving Core Services.

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percent of children were placed out of home at the time their SFY 2008-2009 Core Service episode began.

Permanency goals were available in Trails for 9,161 (87%) of the SFY 09 New Services Cohort. Consistent with the over-arching mission of the Core Services Program, the most proximate[15] Child Welfare permanency goal for the vast majority of children was either to remain at home (60.5%) or to return home (30.5%). The percentage of children with a permanency goal to return home is higher than the proportion of those actually placed out of home at the time the service began. This is because for some children, the most proximate permanency goal was set well before the start of the Core Services episode, likely during a previous out of home placement.

Services Provided (Statewide and by County): All Children Served

Not all children who benefit from (or even directly receive) Core Services are entered into Trails (please refer to the Evaluation Methods section for further discussion). Similarly, not all service

elements are entered in Trails. In cases where private providers are paid on a fee for service contract, the exact type of service, as well as units/length of service and costs, must be entered into Trails for each child receiving services. However, in cases where the provider is paid under a fixed rate contract, the provider is paid the same amount on a monthly basis. In these cases only one service authorization during the month actually needs to be entered in order to process payment (even if the provider provided a number of service units to a number of different children).

Although Division of Child Welfare policy mandates and trains that all services be entered into Trails, some counties enter all children served and all authorizations and some do not. The same inconsistency exists for services provided directly by the county. Therefore, a breakdown of service authorizations into three distinct categories of funding (fee for service, fixed rate contracts and county provided services) offers the chance to look more deeply at fee for service authorizations because the data is more reflective of all services provided. In addition, this approach allows for a summary of the overall contract amounts, with the understanding that the number of service authorizations and children served is under-represented in the fixed rate and county provided services categories. The following figure shows the breakdowns of service authorizations that were recorded in Trails during SFY 2008-2009.

[15]Children had multiple permanency goals; the goal used for this report is the one set in the closest proximity to the date the child began receiving services. Please see the Evaluation Methods section for more details.

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Figure   3: Distribut   tion of Serv   vice Authori   zations, by   y Contract T Type

The majority of service authorizations entered into Trails were paid under fee for service. This logically follows from the administrative requirement that fee for service contracts require all services to be entered into Trails in order for payment, while fixed rate contracts require only one service authorization to be entered even when multiple services are provided. Overall service authorizations show that substance abuse treatment was the most commonly provided service (25.9%). A high proportion of services delivered were county designed services. This may be a factor of county designed programs being created or provided to address uniquely identified needs in 64 counties and the two tribal areas across the state. A list of county designed services is provided in Appendix B of this document.

The majority of service authorizations in Trails are for fee for service. This is consistent with the administrative requirement related to payments – this may or may not reflect actual proportions of services provided to children.

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Figure 44: Distribution of Service Authorizations across all Purchase of Service Types

All Trails Authorizations

There was variation across the types of Core Services provided based on the type of service contract. Counties provided virtually all (99%) Special Economic Assistance, for example. Accounting for variations, however, is difficult, because the number of actual service authorizations for fixed rate contracts and county provided services is unknown.

Roughly half of children served (as entered into Trails) received more than one type of Core Service. Just over one quarter received two different types of service, while the remaining 23 percent received three or more different types of Core Services throughout the fiscal year. Again, it is possible that more children received multiple Core Services than were recorded due to current Trails data entry practices.

A preliminary analysis of children receiving multiple service types did not show any general patterns with one exception: when multiple services were provided, both substance abuse services and mental health services were often provided concurrently. The convergence of these service types makes sense given the high incidence of co-occurring disorders that were reported by counties in their Family Preservation/Core Services Coordinator meetings, as well as Commission Reports during quarterly reporting.

> Substance abuse treatment and mental health services were often provided concurrently, supporting the high incidence of co-occurring disorders reported by counties.

Again, presenting actual expenditures for each type of service is difficult because of variances in Trails data entry practices. Fixed rate contract descriptions often do not match the Core Service Types (e.g., "Treatment Package") and there is no consistent set of data to associate costs provided with specific amounts spent for county provided services. The chart on the next page presents breakdowns for each service type, based on the costs that are actually entered into Trails. The majority of these are likely fee for service contract costs, but may include some fixed rate contract costs and county provided service costs because some counties do consistently enter this data and some enter partial data.

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Figure 5: Distribution of Costs across Service Types

$0 $1M $2M $3M $4M $$5M $ 6M

Fee for Service Contracts only

County Reports of Service Availability and Access

In the Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Reports, roughly half of all counties (48%) reported that current array of available Core Services meets existing community need. A similar number (41%) reported that services are currently not available in their community. Most counties that reported problems with o services noted that transportation barriers are a significant obstacle for families in accessing services. (Please see Appendix B for a more detailed description of each individual Core Services type and its availability within each county.)

Another common concern is the lack of providers generally, as well as the lack of some specific types of providers (e.g., multilingual/multicultural providers, sexual offense-specific treatment may not be sufficient to sustain a provider for a specific type of service. Some rural counties address this issue by pooling resources for a single provider that can serve multiple communities. However, the distance families are required to travel to and from providers makes this kind of service sharing challenging.

In addition to insufficient transportation options and service providers, other barriers mentioned most frequently include inadequate capacity through local mental health centers and designated substance abuse treatment providers, not enough foster homes and volunteer mentors, inadequate or non-existent evening and weekend hours for providers and conflicts between family preservation and the often rigid philosophy and timelines of the judicial system.

According to statute, all counties are required to make all services available to their local communities. In some cases, those services are or can be made available, but are not utilized because of variances in local needs. Alternatively, in some cases, services are needed but not available. Ultimately, infrastructure issues may be an obstacle even where appropriate funds are available for a specific type of service.

The table below shows the actual distribution of service authorizations (duplicated count) entered into Trails, by county.

Table 8: Core Services Distribution: Percent of Trails Authorizations by County SFY 2008-2009

County	Substance Abuse Treatment	County Designed Services	Mental Health Services	Home-Based Services	Life Skills	Family Intensive	Sexual Abuse Therapy	Special Economic Assistance	Day Treatment
Statewide	34.0	19.3	14.3	10.7	7.2	7.0	4.5	2.0	1.0
Adams	30.3	3.8	56.2	3.2	1.1	1.0	2.7	1.5	0.1
Alamosa	13.1	15.1	21.3	11.6	26.6	1.9	3.1	4.6	2.7
Arapahoe	44.8	11.8	10.8	9.0	9.2	3.5	5.9	3.4	1.6
Archuleta	18.8	46.8	6.5	5.8	8.4	--	--	7.1	6.5
Baca	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	100.0	--
Bent	20.9		62.7	--	--	3.0	--	7.5	6.0
Boulder	16.2	20.6	31.4	4.8	4.6	8.1	5.3	4.9	4.0
Broomfield	37.5	4.5	31.6	8.1	10.7	0.5	5.7	0.3	1.0
Chaffee	14.3	12.1	44.0	--	--	11.0	4.4	14.3	--
Cheyenne	--	--	--	--	--	83.3	--	16.7	--
Clear Cree	13.8	--	59.6	--	--	25.5	--	--	1.1
Conejos	20.0	12.3	43.2	1.8	--	11.4	--	10.5	0.9
Costilla	--	--	--	18.4	--	75.5	--	4.1	2.0
Crowley	15.7	--	60.8	--	--	3.9	--	19.6	--
Custer	16.7	--	--	--	--	33.3	--	50.0	--
Delta	4.3	22.5	7.9	6.4	7.2	51.7	--	--	--
Denver	37.9	17.1	10.0	10.5	13.3	0.8	4.4	3.6	2.4
Dolores	--	20.0	16.0	--	4.0	20.0	--	16.0	24.0
Douglas	14.1	2.9	25.8	11.0	9.9	21.1	14.1	--	1.1
Eagle	4.6	0.4	77.5	--	--	17.5	--	--	--
El Paso	40.8	15.6	2.5	18.1	7.1	10.5	5.0	0.5	0.0
Elbert	4.9	55.2	25.5	1.4	4.1	0.5	6.9	0.3	1.1
Fremont	48.2	13.9	9.0	3.9	2.0	0.6	4.3	18.1	--
Garfield	19.4	0.9	69.8	1.9	3.6	0.3	1.0	1.5	1.6
Gilpin	8.1	6.2	79.5	--	3.7	--	2.5	--	--

Table 8: Core Services Distribution: Percent of Trails Authorizations by County SFY 2008-2009

County	Substance Abuse Treatment	County Designed Treatment	Mental Health Services	Home-Based Services	Life Skills Services	Family Intensive	Sexual Abuse Therapy Treatment	Special Economic Assistance	Day Treatment
Grand	0.9	2.5	8.9	0.9	15.2	70.3	--	1.3	--
Gunnison	2.9	8.7	29.0	58.0	--	--	--	1.4	--
Huerfano	53.8	4.3	31.2	3.2	2.2	--	--	5.4	--
Jackson	--	32.1	39.3	--	--	17.9	--	10.7	--
Jefferson	39.9	8.7	20.4	12.7	3.1	2.3	8.9	0.9	3.2
Kit Carson	22.0	2.0	29.0	21.0	15.0	1.0	1.0	9.0	
La Plata	34.1	13.8	11.8	3.9	14.9	10.7	0.7	6.5	3.6
Lake	35.6	--	5.9	1.0	0.7	19.5	36.3	1.0	--
Larimer	14.0	56.2	9.9	0.1	8.3	7.4	2.5	1.2	0.5
Las Animas	31.8	--	34.5	1.8	5.5	12.7	--	10.9	2.7
Lincoln	4.7	2.3	8.6	15.6	7.8	50.8	--	5.5	4.7
Logan	49.3	6.6	31.2	1.9	3.0	5.5	2.5	--	--
Mesa	23.9	25.6	32.7	4.8	1.9	6.9	--	--	4.2
Mineral	75.0	--	25.0	--	--	--	--	--	--
Moffat	7.0	64.6	22.8	0.5	4.1	0.1	0.6	0.2	--
Montezuma	47.1	16.7	4.8	0.2	0.4	6.7	8.0	12.8	3.3
Montrose	6.7	7.6	25.4	2.2	5.6	39.4	0.8	2.1	10.3
Morgan	75.5	6.4	4.6	5.7	3.4	0.6	0.4	2.3	1.1
Otero	13.6	--	60.5	3.4	--	0.7	--	8.8	12.9
Ouray	1.1	--	5.7	--	1.1	90.8	--	1.1	--
Park	46.1	1.2	4.5	8.2	8.2	24.7	4.9	2.1	--
Phillips	--	--	100.0	--	--	--	--	--	--
Pitkin	42.9	--	57.1	--	--	--	--	--	--
Prowers	11.6	--	3.9	21.7	19.4	40.3	--	3.1	--
Pueblo	8.6	61.7	11.6	7.1	--	3.5	2.3	4.7	0.6
Rio Blanco	33.9	8.7	32.9	1.1	10.1	11.9	1.4	--	--
Rio Grande	32.1	--	18.3	1.5	19.1	--	9.2	16.0	3.8
Routt	8.8	27.9	48.6	0.4	4.0	8.4	--	2.0	--
Saguache	7.9	--	28.1	--	--	55.3	7.0	1.8	--
San Juan	--	--	100.0	--	--	--	--	--	--
Sedgwick	5.0	30.0	20.0	--	10.0	--	--	35.0	--
Summit	13.6	5.2	30.5	0.4	5.6	43.9	--	0.1	0.6
Teller	35.8	13.2	29.2	7.2	5.0	3.0	3.9	2.6	--
Washington	0.9	42.7	20.5	9.4	10.3	0.9	2.6	12.8	--
Weld	35.9	11.7	16.0	4.2	21.9	2.3	3.1	2.3	2.5
Yuma	30.4	--	49.3	17.4	--	--	--	2.9	--

There is significant variation across counties in the Core Services delivered (as reflected in service authorizations entered into Trails). This reflects both variances in the needs of local communities as well as the reported difficulty in accessing services in some areas. In some smaller counties, relatively few Core Services are utilized on a regular basis, while many

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(generally larger) counties are likely to utilize all nine service types. This pattern demonstrates both the degree of flexibility of the Core Services Program to respond to local need and the access challenges that have been articulated by some counties.

Impact of Local Collaboration Efforts

Counties highlighted many local collaboration efforts and reported striking benefits as a result of working closely with other community providers and agencies. Collaboration efforts include House Bill 1451 collaborative planning teams, Family to Family Principles, Promoting Safe and Stable Families, other types of cross system planning teams, and case review teams, and special treatment court teams (e.g. family drug courts, juvenile drug courts), among others. Specific benefits of collaborative efforts include enhancing the cost effectiveness of Core Services funding by decreasing duplication of services, improving use of all available community services, ending or changing services when the client is no longer benefitting and preventing returns to the Core Services Program due to broader, continuous community support for families.

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Comparative Costs of the Core Services Program

In SFY 2008-09, a total of $45,956,710 was allocated to the Family and Children's line and expended through the Core Services Program. This figure includes initial allocations to counties and one tribe. Through the Core Plan process, Counties requested an additional $4,184,471 in order to meet the growing needs for services in their communities. However, the requested additional funding was not available to meet the needs of children and families.

> Current funding levels are not adequate to provide needed services to children and their families.

As reported in this year's Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Report insufficient funding remains a challenge in providing adequate Core Services programs in order to prevent out of home placements. Each year, many counties and tribes use additional funding sources to support Core Services in their communities. This year, 45 counties reported using additional funding sources to fill critical gaps in services. Twenty-seven of these counties provided estimated amounts for the funding sources they used, totaling $6,216,921. An additional $255,758 of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) supported core services programs. The remaining 18 counties (of the 45 reporting use of additional funds) reported funding sources but not specific dollar amounts. A list of additional funding sources as reported by the County Commissions is provided in Appendix B.

This section discusses the distribution of Core Services costs across the different contract types and costs per child for each contract type. As noted earlier, fee for service authorizations are consistent throughout the data system and allow for an accurate matching between the individual child and the services provided to that child on a fee for service contract. Therefore, where services were provided on a fee for service basis, we are able to link actual service amounts and units provided along with the costs of those services to a specific child and calculate an accurate cost per child. Frequently, this report refers to undercounts of services and children served due to known variances in data entry policies across the counties for fixed rate contracts and county provided services. Total dollar amounts spent in these two categories are accurate; however, numbers and costs of specific services are likely low (possibly significantly so for fixed rate contracts). Costs per child were estimated for fixed rate contracts and county provided services using different methodologies than for fee for service contracts due to the lower reliability of the data. Please refer to the methodology section for details.

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Figure 6 below shows the distribution of Core Services Costs, based on the types of service contract.

Figure 6: Distribution of Core Services Costs across Contract Types

The following table compares the proportion of Core Services dollars spent vs. proportion of Core Services delivered as recorded currently in Trails.

Table 9: Proportion of Expenditures vs. Proportion of Services Recorded Proportion, by Contract Type

	Number of Service Authorizations (duplicated count)	Proportion of Services[16]	Proportion of Expenditures
Fixed Rate Contracts	3,961	8.4%	24.8%
County Provided Services	14,701	30.9%	36.2%
Fee for Service Contracts	28,707	60.3%	40.0%

These figures illustrate the disparity in the amount of services being provided under fixed rate contracts, based on dollars spent vs. the services provided, as recorded in Trails. The proportion of services provided under fixed rate contracts is low relative to the proportion of

expenditu ures in this c   category. Th   his discrepan   ncy reflects t   the underco   unting of se   rvices provid ded
under fix ed rate cont   tracts. The c   consistency b   between the   e proportion   of services p   provided by   the
counties   and the pro   portion of co   ounty provid   ed expendit   ures seems   to suggest t   that most
counties   are consiste   ently enterin   g county pro   ovided servic   ces into Tra   ils.

[16] Based on n number of se ervice authoriza ations.

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Costs of Service per Child

For fee for service contracts, the actual expenditures per child are available from Trails. The average cost, then, represents the actual cost per child, summed and divided by the total number of children served. Because individual actual costs are unavailable for fixed-rate contract or county provided services, those average costs per child are derived by estimating a cost per child per day, multiplied by the average length of service. These procedures are more fully explained in the Evaluation Methodology section.

Table 10: Proportion of Expenditures vs. Proportion of Services Recorded

	Average Cost per Child Over Entire Course of Core Services Episode
Fixed Rate Contracts	$4,081 per child
County Provided Services	$3,130 per child
Fee for Service Contracts	$2,615 per child

In cases where there is a fee for service contract in place, the provider is paid for each individual service provided to a specific child (or family, on behalf of the child). In this case, in order to process payment, all services must be entered into Trails. If there is a fixed rate contract in place, the provider receives a fixed amount of dollars per month to provide a standard service across multiple children and families. In these cases, in order to process payment, only one service unit for one child needs to be entered. Some counties choose to enter all children served within each family and some counties do not, primarily due to the significant workload required to do so. In cases where the county provides a service directly, no service information is required in order to process payment, since a payment is not being made.

> Data entry practices vary significantly across counties and contract types, challenging the accuracy of cost estimates.

The Child Welfare policy is that counties should enter all of the services they provide. The actual practices for entering this data vary from county to county. Because of this, the overall Core Services report will only estimate costs per child for fixed rate contracts and county provided services at the statewide level, not broken down by county. Fee for services costs are calculated from the actual dollar amounts paid, as reflected in Service details entered into Trails. Averages are presented here by county. These costs per child represent all costs incurred during this fiscal year. Costs for services extending to prior fiscal years are not included. Because these are actual costs entered into Trails, these averages reflect the actual length of

time a child is served.

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Table 11: SFY 2008-2009 Average Cost per Child (Fee for Service Contracts only), all Services in an Episode[17]

County	Avg. Cost Per Child	County	Avg. Cost Per Child
Adams	$ 3,098.73	Kit Carson	$ 812.50
Alamosa	$ 842.05	Lake	$ 1,226.70
Arapahoe	$ 1,967.79	La Plata/San Juan	$ 168.08
Archuleta	$ 525.25	Larimer	$ 2,030.19
Baca	--	Las Animas	$ 592.68
Bent	$ 1,971.67	Lincoln	$ 2,712.40
Boulder	$ 761.02	Logan	$ 1,619.50
Broomfield	$ 3,398.02	Mesa	--
Chaffee	$ 679.64	Mineral	--
Cheyenne	$ 2,812.50	Moffat	$ 1,152.87
Clear Creek	$ 1,283.54	Montezuma	$ 1,102.27
Conejos	$ 2,145.00	Montrose	$ 1,703.06
Costilla	$ 1,677.71	Morgan	$ 334.91
Crowley	$ 635.71	Otero	$ 1,157.18
Custer	$ 160.00	Ouray/San Miguel	$ 996.54
Delta	$ 2,021.62	Park	$ 1,269.60
Denver	$ 1,991.33	Phillips	--
Dolores	$ 3,883.25	Pitkin	$ 1,376.15
Douglas	$ 2,976.52	Prowers	$ 1,750.00
Eagle	$ 1,768.66	Pueblo	$ 1,007.52
El Paso	$ 3,132.41	Rio Blanco	$ 5,104.67
Elbert	$ 4,370.34	Rio Grande	$ 1,265.68
Fremont	$ 657.38	Routt	$ 1,052.31
Garfield	$ 2,699.95	Saguache	$ 1,646.65
Gilpin	$ 1,257.49	Sedgwick	--
Grand	$ 2,040.86	Summit	$ 1,458.64
Gunnison/Hinsdale	$ 2,819.39	Teller	$ 2,981.62

Huerfano	$	300.00	Washington	$	1,631.25
Jackson	$	3,620.00	Weld	$	3,252.07
Jefferson	$	5,000.25	Yuma		--
State Average	**$ 2,615.00**				

These analyses underscore the difficulty in pinpointing precise costs for services delivered directly by the county and on a fixed rate contract. For that reason, costs for specific service types are difficult to determine.

[17] Costs are not shown for counties in cases where Trails extracts contained no Fee for Service Details.

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Program Effectiveness: Core Services Outcomes

Is the Core Services Program making strides toward fulfilling its mission?

This is the fundamental question regarding program effectiveness. In pursuit of this mission, the Core Services Program provides direct services to maintain children safely in the home while building the skills and resources of caregivers. When it is in the best interests of the child to be placed out of the home, the Core Services Program intends to serve the child in the least restrictive setting possible and, if appropriate, to return that child home as quickly as possible or secure a less restrictive permanent placement.

The Core Services Mission
To help strengthen Colorado families and keep children and families together.

Based on the program mission and the services provided to support that mission, three overarching measures of program effectiveness are examined:
4) **Successful completion of services** – the positive disposition of the child's case at the time Core Service delivery ends;
5) **Serving children in the home or in the least restrictive setting possible** – lowering the incidence and length of out of home placement during service delivery and after Core Services end; and
6) **Child safety** – lowering the incidence of child abuse and neglect during service delivery and after Core Services end.

Table 12, below, shows the number of children identified as having ended Core Services during SFY 2007-2008 and SFY 2008-2009. These two groups of children make up the two discharge[18] cohorts for the initial stages of a longitudinal analysis of Core Services outcomes and provide the basis for the following analyses. Please see the Evaluation Method Section above for information regarding discharge cohorts.

Table 12: Core Services Discharge Cohorts

	SFY 2007-2008	SFY 2008-2009
Total Un-duplicated Count	12,039	12,327

Successful Completion of Core Services

The successful completion of a Core Service episode is examined through Leave Reasons as entered into Trails. Leave Reasons are entered by the case worker as a description of the disposition of a case at the time each authorization for service ends. There are many possible reasons for ending services. For this report, Leave Reasons are divided into three categories: positive, negative and neutral Leave Reasons. As shown below, 45 percent of discharges in SFY 2008-2009 were positive, 20 percent were neutral and 17 percent were negative Leave Reasons. Seventeen percent (17%) were entered as "other." Ideally, the incidence of "other" would be significantly lower and, with continued improvements to Trails (including the addition of Leave Reason options), this will likely be the case in future years.

[18]Completion of services (with a positive or negative disposition) or a break in services lasting more than two months (62 days) is considered a discharge.

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The table below provides a further breakdown within these categories. Not all Leave Reasons are listed below. In some cases where a specific Leave Reason occurred very rarely, it is incorporated into a related category. For example, the "administrative" leave reason includes error corrections (in payment amounts or provider codes). See the Evaluation Methods section for a complete list of Leave Reasons.

The Trails data team and DCW, working with the Core Services Program Coordinators, continues to improve the functionality and content of case and service records. One significant change resulted in improvements to Leave Reasons and will allow us to compare Leave Reasons across years in future reports. Table 13, below, shows the distribution of Leave Reasons for only the SFY 2008-2009 discharge cohort.

Table 13: Leave Reasons: SFY 2008-2009 Discharge Cohort (Unduplicated Children)

Leave Reason[19]	Unduplicated Count of Children	Percent
Positive Leave Reasons	**5622**	**45.6%**
In Home-Case Successfully Closed	3055	24.8%
In Home without Service Follow-up	1232	10.0%
In Home Follow-up with Additional Core	1335	10.8%
"Neutral" Leave Reasons	**2486**	**20.2%**
Administrative	678	5.5%
Child/Family Moved	326	2.6%
Client Health Issue	31	0.3%

Closed upon Assessment	887	7.2%
Transfer to New Service or Provider/Type	564	4.6%
Negative Leave Reasons	**2121**	**17.2%**
Family Refused/Inactive/Failed to Comply	928	7.5%
Out of Home Placement[20]	1093	8.9%
Runaway	100	0.8%
Other	**2098**	**17.0%**
Total	**12,327**[21]	**100%**

[19] Please see the Evaluation Methods section for a full list of all Leave Reasons.

[20] Please note that an out of home placement may be the most appropriate and least restrictive option for a child and it is therefore not a negative outcome for that child. For purposes of cost effectiveness, out of home placement is considered a negative outcome due to associated increased cost.

[21] This report assumes that some children will have new service authorizations during SFY 2009-2010 and within 62 days of previous discharge so that they will no longer be considered part of the SFY09 discharge cohort. In these cases they will become (presumably) part of the SFY 2009-2010 discharge cohort for purposes of the longitudinal outcome analysis.

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Table 14 shows Leave Reasons by county. For this analysis, the neutral Leave Reasons have been combined into a single category and runaways have been combined with other negative Leave Reasons. Total percentages for each county do not equal 100% because Leave Reasons included under "other" in the table above are not included in this table.

Table 14: Core Services Discharge Leave Reasons

County	Total SFY 2008-2009 Discharges (Unduplicated Count)	Positive Leave Reasons		Neutral Leave Reasons	Negative Leave Reasons	
		Successful In-Home Case	Follow up with Core In-Home, Follow up	In-Home, No Follow up Neutral Leave Reason	Family Refused/ Inactive/Failed to Comply/ Runaway[22]	Out of home Placement
Adams	686 30%	7%	7%	20%	15%	3%
Alamosa	146 27%	3%	23%	16%	3%	11%
Arapahoe	1,090 32%	8%	12%	13%	7%	16%
Archuleta	69 58%	10%	9%	9%	6%	--
Bent	21 52%	--	5%	10%	10%	--
Boulder	576 26%	20%	18%	18%	7%	6%

County	Total Discharges (Unduplicated Count)	Successful In-Home Care	Follow up with Core In-Home	Neutral Leave Reasons	Family Refused/Inactive/Failed to Comply/Run away[22]	Out of home Placement
Broomfield	67 46%	--	1%	15%	7%	6%
Chaffee	26 58%	--	4%	12%	8%	--
Cheyenne	1	--	--	--	100%	--
Clear Cree	32 25%	--	--	47%	--	--
Conejos	47 34%	--	2%	21%	15%	11%
Costilla	5 40%	--	--	40%	20%	--
Crowley	12 17%	8%	8%	17%	17%	--
Custer	2	--	--	50%	50%	--
Delta	74 36%	--	3%	32%	4%	1%
Denver	2,365 13%	3%	7%	25%	7%	1%
Dolores	4 75%	--	--	--	25%	--
Douglas	71 38%	3%	6%	24%	7%	11%
Eagle	52 56%	2%	--	23%	8%	2%
El Paso	1,088 25%	7%	20%	28%	6%	10%
Elbert	58 36%	12%	3%	31%	9%	--
Fremont	212 19%	1%	5%	16%	13%	6%
Garfield	129 14%	2%	3%	61%	16%	3%
Gilpin	16 31%	--	--	31%	31%	--
Grand	29 24%	7%	21%	41%	3%	--
Gunnison	24 33%	--	--	21%	17%	--
Huerfano	40 40%	--	--	23%	23%	3%

[22] Runaways were incorporated into this category because the occurrence was infrequent.

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Table 14: Core Services Discharge Leave Reasons

County	Total SFY 2008-2009 Discharges (Unduplicated Count)	Positive Leave Reasons		Neutral Leave Reasons	Negative Leave Reasons	
		Successful In-Home Care	Follow up with Core In-Home, Follow up	Follow up In-Home, No Neutral Leave Reason	Family Refused/Inactive/Failed to Comply/Run away[22]	Out of home Placement
Jackson	4 25%	--	--	50%	--	--
Jefferson	1,059 35%	3%	9%	15%	15%	18%
Kit Carson	22 36%	--	--	9%	14%	--
La Plata	138 32%	5%	14%	24%	10%	9%
Lake	46 28%	--	--	50%	9%	--
Larimer	1,683 16%	41%	24%	5%	2%	10%
Las Animas	35 17%	--	--	54%	17%	--

County	Total SFY 2008-2009 Discharges (Unduplicated Count)					
Lincoln	34 29%	3%	9%	29%	15%	--
Logan	33 27%	9%	9%	21%	12%	6%
Mesa	339 5%	1%	--	39%	2%	0%
Mineral	2 100%	--	--	--	--	--
Moffat	138 14%	--	--	62%	22%	--
Montezuma	81 31%	2%	14%	19%	22%	4%
Montrose	93 22%	5%	4%	23%	27%	8%
Morgan	164 48%	4%	15%	12%	5%	11%
Otero	24 42%	--	--	42%	4%	--
Ouray	9	--	--	78%	11%	--
Park	43 86%	--	--	12%	--	2%
Phillips	4	--	--	75%	--	25%
Pitkin	14 50%	--	--	7%	21%	--
Prowers	61 46%	3%	--	33%	3%	7%
Pueblo	543 43%	6%	7%	20%	10%	10%
Rio Blanco	43 60%	7%	--	5%	21%	--
Rio Grande	53 26%	2%	6%	30%	17%	11%
Routt	21 33%	--	5%	52%	--	5%
Saguache	19 63%	--	5%	16%	11%	--
Sedgwick	5 60%	--	--	40%	--	--
Summit	32 34%	--	13%	28%	22%	--
Teller	94 36%	2%	3%	40%	5%	10%
Washington	20 35%	--	--	30%	10%	--
Weld	513 13%	0%	0%	12%	6%	3%
Yuma	16 19%	6%	6%	50%	13%	6%

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Table 15 presents Leave Reasons by county with total percentages of positive, neutral, negative and "Other." [23]

Table 15: Leave Reasons by County with Total Percentages of Positive, Negative, Neutral and "Other"

Total Percentages

County	Total SFY 2008-2009 Discharges (Unduplicated Count)	Positive Leave Reasons	Neutral Leave Reasons	Negative Leave Reasons	Leave Reasons	"Other" in Trails indicated a

County	Total	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Other
Adams	686	44%	20%	18%	18%
Alamosa	146	53%	16%	14%	17%
Arapahoe	1,090	52%	13%	23%	12%
Archuleta	69	77%	9%	6%	8%
Bent	21	57%	10%	10%	23%
Boulder	576	64%	18%	13%	5%
Broomfield	67	47%	15%	13%	25%
Chaffee	26	62%	12%	8%	18%
Cheyenne	1	--	--	100%	--
Clear Cree	32	25%	47%	0%	28%
Conejos	47	36%	21%	26%	17%
Costilla	5	40%	40%	20%	--
Crowley	12	33%	17%	17%	33%
Custer	2	50%	50%	--	--
Delta	74	39%	32%	5%	24%
Denver	2,365	23%	25%	8%	44%
Dolores	4	75%	--	25%	--
Douglas	71	47%	24%	18%	11%
Eagle	52	58%	23%	10%	9%
El Paso	1,088	52%	28%	16%	4%
Elbert	58	51%	31%	9%	9%
Fremont	212	25%	16%	19%	40%
Garfield	129	19%	61%	19%	1%
Gilpin	16	31%	31%	31%	7%
Grand	29	52%	41%	3%	4%
Gunnison	24	33%	21%	17%	29%
Huerfano	40	40%	23%	26%	11%
Jackson	4	25%	50%	--	25%

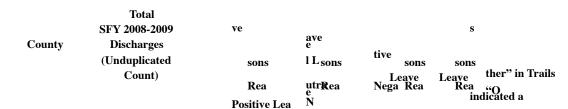[23] Trails includes "other" as a selection option for Leave Reason.

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Table 15: Leave Reasons by County with Total Percentages of Positive, Negative, Neutral and "Other"

Total Percentages

County	Total SFY 2008-2009 Discharges (Unduplicated Count)	Positive Leave Reasons	Neutral Leave Reasons	Negative Leave Reasons	"Other" in Trails indicated a

Jefferson	1,059	47%	15%	33%	5%
Kit Carson	22	36%	9%	14%	41%
La Plata	138	51%	24%	19%	6%
Lake	46	28%	50%	9%	13%
Larimer	1,683	81%	5%	12%	2%
Las Animas	35	17%	54%	17%	12%
Lincoln	34	41%	29%	15%	15%
Logan	33	45%	21%	18%	16%
Mesa	339	6%	39%	2%	53%
Mineral	2	100%	--	--	--
Moffat	138	14%	62%	22%	2%
Montezuma	81	47%	19%	26%	8%
Montrose	93	31%	23%	35%	11%
Morgan	164	67%	12%	16%	5%
Otero	24	42%	42%	4%	12%
Ouray	9	0%	78%	11%	11%
Park	43	86%	12%	2%	--
Phillips	4	0%	75%	25%	--
Pitkin	14	50%	7%	21%	22%
Prowers	61	49%	33%	10%	8%
Pueblo	543	56%	20%	20%	4%
Rio Blanco	43	67%	5%	21%	7%
Rio Grande	53	34%	30%	28%	8%
Routt	21	38%	52%	5%	5%
Saguache	19	68%	16%	11%	5%
Sedgwick	5	60%	40%	--	--
Summit	32	47%	28%	22%	3%
Teller	94	41%	40%	15%	4%
Washington	20	35%	30%	10%	25%
Weld	513	13%	12%	9%	66%
Yuma	16	31%	50%	19%	--

Returns to Core Services

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For this report, a "return to service" is defined as the start of a new service episode after a break longer than two months (62 days) following a discharge. Table 16, below, shows the proportion of children discharged during the previous fiscal year with a new Core Services episode beginning within 12 months following discharge. This data is presented only for the SFY 2007-2008 discharge cohort, because 12 months has not yet elapsed for most of the SFY 2008-2009 discharges. Overall, 15% of children discharged in SFY 2008-2009 returned for additional core services within 12 months meaning 85% did not return for additional services.

Table 16: SFY 2007-2008 Discharges - Returns to Core Services

County[24]	Children Returning to Core Services within One Year		County	Children Returning to Core Services within One Year	
	Children (Unduplicated)	Percent Returning		Children (Unduplicated)	Percent Returning
Adams	689	4.9	Lake	17	11.8
Alamosa	122	15.6	Larimer	1,407	22.5
Arapahoe	1,471	9.7	Las Animas	33	6.1
Archuleta	52	26.9	Lincoln	31	12.9
Bent	15	13.3	Logan	48	2.1
Boulder	494	18.2	Mesa	269	14.1
Broomfield	46	6.5	Moffat	102	17.6
Chaffee	16	0	Montezuma	42	9.5
Clear Creek	19	10.5	Montrose	76	9.2
Conejos	26	19.2	Morgan	132	11.4
Crowley	11	9.1	Otero	36	2.8
Delta	105	5.7	Ouray	12	8.3
Denver	2,573	24.4	Park	46	17.4
Douglas	59	6.8	Phillips	12	0
Eagle	77	2.6	Pitkin	9	11.1
El Paso	1,120	12.3	Prowers	59	5.1
Elbert	48	10.4	Pueblo	519	6.0
Fremont	227	29.1	Rio Blanco	29	13.8
Garfield	139	19.4	Rio Grande	23	8.7
Gilpin	15	6.7	Routt	21	4.8
Grand	36	11.1	Saguache	9	22.2
Gunnison	30	6.7	Summit	30	0
Huerfano	32	3.1	Teller	73	8.2
Jefferson	1,050	9.9	Washington	9	11.1
Kit Carson	12	8.3	Weld	317	3.5
La Plata	144	9.7	Yuma	39	2.6
Totals	**12,028**	**14**			

[24] Only counties with at least 10 discharges in the fiscal year are included here. Low numbers skew the proportions.

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Maintaining Children in the Home

A central goal of the Core Services Program is to keep

Overall, 93% of children served

children and families together, by serving children who
are at risk for out of home placement in the home
whenever appropriate and possible. Nearly all children
with discharges in SFY 2008-2009 who were at home
at the time Core Services began were maintained in
their homes during their Core Service episodes. Overall, only seven percent (7%) of these
children were placed out of the home during their service episode. Table 17, below, shows the
distribution across counties of the children who did not require an out of home placement during
the time they were participating in Core Services.

through Core Services were
maintained at home during their
service episode.

Table 17: SFY 2007-2008 Discharges
Children Maintained at Home During Core Services

| | SFY 2007-2008 | | SFY 2008-2009 | |
	Number of Children (Unduplicated)	Percent Maintained	Number of Children (Unduplicated)	Percent Maintained
Statewide	12,039	89.0	12,327	93.0
Adams	688	84.2	686	86.7
Alamosa	122	92.6	146	92.5
Arapahoe	1,467	87.9	1,090	91.3
Archuleta	52	88.5	69	98.6
Bent	15	86.7	21	90.5
Boulder	491	86.8	576	86.8
Broomfield	46	76.1	67	83.6
Chaffee	16	87.5	26	96.2
Clear Creek	19	94.7	32	90.6
Conejos	25	92.0	47	93.6
Crowley	11	90.9	12	100
Delta	105	84.8	74	89.2
Denver	2,570	93.3	2,364	93.4
Douglas	57	84.2	71	93.0
Eagle	77	100	52	94.2
El Paso	1,116	88.5	1,088	92.8
Elbert	48	89.6	58	100
Fremont	227	89.9	212	95.3
Garfield	139	94.2	129	99.2
Gilpin	15	80.0	16	100
Grand	36	77.8	29	100
Gunnison	30	86.7	24	83.3
Huerfano	32	68.8	40	80.0
Jefferson	1,047	88.3	1,059	92.5
Kit Carson	12	91.7	22	90.9

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Table 17: SFY 2007-2008 Discharges
Children Maintained at Home During Core Services

| | SFY 2007-2008 | | SFY 2008-2009 | |
	Number of Children (Unduplicated)	Percent Maintained	Number of Children (Unduplicated)	Percent Maintained
La Plata	144	92.4	138	93.5
Lake	17	88.2	46	95.7
Larimer	1,402	92.2	1,683	97.0
Las Animas	33	87.9	35	85.7
Lincoln	31	83.9	34	88.2
Logan	48	62.5	33	87.9
Mesa	269	84.0	339	91.4
Moffat	102	92.2	138	96.4
Montezuma	41	92.7	81	91.4
Montrose	75	85.3	93	92.5
Morgan	132	90.2	164	97.6
Otero	36	75.0	24	83.3
Ouray	12	100	9	88.9
Park	46	93.5	43	100
Phillips	12	100	--	--
Pitkin	--	--	14	92.9
Prowers	59	78.2	61	100
Pueblo	519	100	543	91.5
Rio Blanco	29	82.6	43	97.7
Rio Grande	23	95.2	53	86.8
Routt	21	96.7	21	95.2
Summit	30	95.9	32	100
Teller	73	87.5	94	97.9
Washington	8	85.2	20	95.0
Weld	317	82.1	513	93.8
Yuma	39	84.2	16	81.3

Of those children who were discharged during the fiscal year, 20 percent were in an out of home placement on the date they began Core Services. Nearly two-thirds (64%) of these children left their out of home placement and moved to a less restrictive setting (including returning home) at some time during their Core Services episode.

The table below shows, for children discharged during SFY 2007-2008, the proportion who experienced an out of home placement in the 12 months before their Core Services episode, during the episode, and the 12 months following the Core Services episode. Please note that counties with fewer

Of children who began Core Services in an out of home placement, nearly two thirds moved to a less restrictive setting during their service episode.

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than 10 discharges in the fiscal year are not included because small numbers create large distortions in the percentages.

Table 18: SFY 2007-2008 Discharges Out of Home Placements Before, During, & After Last Core Service Authorization[25]

	Number of Children (Unduplicated)	Percent with OOH Before	Percent with OOH During	Percent with OOH After
Statewide	12,039	49.4	11.0	21.0
Adams	688	54.8	15.8	17.6
Alamosa	122	20.5	7.4	12.3
Arapahoe	1,467	35.1	12.1	18.2
Archuleta	52	15.4	11.5	7.7
Bent	15	46.7	13.3	33.3
Boulder	491	52.1	13.2	22.0
Broomfield	46	63.0	23.9	21.7
Chaffee	16	43.8	12.5	25.0
Clear Creek	19	10.5	5.3	15.8
Conejos	25	20.0	8.0	12.0
Crowley	11	36.4	9.1	9.1
Delta	105	30.5	15.2	13.3
Denver	2,570	63.2	6.7	33.3
Douglas	57	57.9	15.8	36.8
Eagle	77	11.7	0	1.3
El Paso	1,116	56.9	11.5	21.9
Elbert	48	33.3	10.4	10.4
Fremont	227	63.0	10.1	31.3
Garfield	139	37.4	5.8	21.6
Gilpin	15	26.7	20.0	6.7
Grand	36	36.1	22.2	13.9
Gunnison	30	6.7	13.3	10.0
Huerfano	32	31.3	31.3	18.8
Jefferson	1,047	51.9	11.7	17.3
Kit Carson	12	33.3	8.3	33.3
La Plata	144	20.1	7.6	14.6
Lake	17	29.4	11.8	17.6
Larimer	1,402	37.7	7.8	16.0
Las Animas	33	18.2	12.1	18.2
Lincoln	31	51.6	16.1	19.4
Logan	48	47.9	37.5	2.1

[25] These categories are overlapping, meaning a single child could be in all three or not have an out of home placement at all. Therefore, these percentages will not add up to 100.

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Table 18: SFY 2007-2008 Discharges
Out of Home Placements Before, During, & After Last
Core Service Authorization[25]

	Number of Children (Unduplicated)	Percent with OOH Before	Percent with OOH During	Percent with OOH After
Mesa	269	61.0	16.0	29.4
Moffat	102	21.6	7.8	3.9
Montezuma	41	24.4	7.3	7.3
Montrose	75	49.3	14.7	13.3
Morgan	132	56.1	9.8	12.1
Otero	36	63.9	25.0	11.1
Ouray	12	8.3	0	0
Park	46	17.4	6.5	8.7
Phillips	12	16.7	0	0
Prowers	59	18.6	10.2	0
Pueblo	519	73.6	21.8	17.5
Rio Blanco	29	10.3	0	3.4
Rio Grande	23	30.4	17.4	13.0
Routt	21	14.3	4.8	9.5
Summit	30	20.0	3.3	3.3
Teller	73	21.9	4.1	12.3
Washington	8	50.0	12.5	12.5
Weld	317	60.9	14.8	16.4
Yuma	39	28.2	17.9	2.6

Across all except two of the counties reported here, the proportion of children experiencing an out of home placement in the 12 months directly following their last Core Services authorization was lower than the proportion experiencing an out of home placement in the 12 months prior to the start of their Core Services episode. Two counties experienced an increased proportion, but this only occurred because of the very small number of SFY 2007-2008 discharges, meaning that the placement of a small number of children greatly influenced the proportion.

A preliminary logistic regression showed that the overall length of service was predictive of risk of out of home placement. Children with longer lengths of service were less likely to be placed out of home.[26] The relationship between types of services received and out of home placement was also analyzed and the pattern was less clear. There was some indication that Home-Based Services, Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse services might be related to a lower likelihood of out of home placement. However, since many children received all of these services and because of the known variance in data entry of all services, it is not possible to reach any definitive conclusions at this time. As more services are entered into Trails, more sophisticated statistical models of service delivery can be developed and the impact of the types of services will be further explored.

[26] χ_2=10.71; p=.001

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Potential Cost-Savings of Core Services: Reduced Out of Home Placement Days

An examination of the number of days in out of home placements in the 12 months prior to Core Services versus out of home placement days during the 12 months following services, provides a preliminary indicator of the cost efficiencies associated with the Core Services Program. Table 19 below shows the average length of stay (LOS) in out of home placements for these children during the 12 months prior and 12 months following Core Services. It also estimates the associated number of days placed out of home with the number of children placed.

Table 19: Estimated Out of Home Placement Days, Before and After Core Service Episode

	SFY 2007-2008 Discharge Cohort	
	12 Months Pre-Core Services[27]	12 Months Post-Core Services
Total number of children (unduplicated) with an out of home placement	5,947	2,528
Average LOS of placement	141 days	66 days

Multiplying the average length of stay by the number of children with out of home placements during this period can provide an illustration of how many days are spent in out of home placement by this sample of children before and after their Core Services episode. In light of the high costs associated with out of home placements, the reduction in both the number of these highly restrictive placements and the average length of stay point to a potential for significant cost savings. Multiplying the number of children with an out of home placement in the 12 months prior to the episode (n=5,947) by the average number of days an individual child was placed out of home during those 12 months (141 days), results in 838,527 days spent in out of home placement. When comparing that to not only the reduced number of children who experienced an out of home placement after their Core Service episode (n=2,528), but also the lower average number of days in that placement (66 days), the total number of days in out of home placement is much lower (166,848 days).

> Available data point to a reduction in out of home placements for children served through Core Services, suggesting significant cost savings.

Ideally, the exact number of days could be calculated using Trails placement records. However, there is significant overlap across records, precluding a calculation based on actual figures at this time. This overlap can be overcome by carefully matching records; we will explore this solution further in the planning process for next year's report.

In addition, if length of stay data can be linked with cost data for individual children, an actual estimate of cost-savings can be calculated. This calculation could be further strengthened if a

27 In order to account for the smaller overall amount of time available post-Core Services (a maximum of 12 months, ending on June 30, 2009), the average LOS computation for pre-Core out of home placements assumed a begin date of no earlier than July 1, 2006 (one year prior to the beginning of the fiscal year).

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control group could be identified. However, even in the absence of such a group, before and after comparisons have the potential to provide some indication of cost-savings. Again, this will be explored in the planning process for next year's evaluation report.

In this year's Family Preservation/Core Services Reports, counties commented on factors driving out of home placements and lengths of stay. The most commonly mentioned factor was court orders for out of home placement or for specific types of service or lengths of service that did not match the needs of the family as identified by the Core Services team and were incompatible with family preservation values and practice. One extreme example was a court ordered, 2 year out of home placement. Another example is court orders for specific child-focused treatment such as anger management when parenting skills interventions were indicated as the primary driver of child risk as assessed by the treatment team.

Other factors mentioned frequently include inadequate or non-existent foster homes, unavailability of specific service types (e.g., sex offender treatment, multilingual/multicultural services, placement options and all types of services for older children, support services for children with developmental disabilities) and lack of financial resources. Ineffective or limited communication among community treatment team members and out of community placements had a negative impact on lengths of stay.

County Commissions also commented on factors influencing the Program's success in avoiding out of home placements and extended lengths of stay. The most frequently mentioned factors include the provision of intensive in home services, frequent case staffing, early involvement of Core Services (and other early intervention strategies), effective cross systems planning teams, family involvement in treatment planning and decision making, intensive efforts to locate kin and supportive friends and commitment to placement with biological family as the best option for most children.

Success Stories. In the Family Preservation/Core Services County Commission Reports, counties shared specific stories of success. All of the stories present anecdotal evidence of the value of Core Services to the families involved. A recurring theme of the stories is the importance of flexibility in meeting very specific needs of children and families. The stories support the positive data presented throughout this report. Space limitations prevent inclusion of these narrative stories but two were selected as examples and are included in Appendix E.

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County Commissions Make Suggestions for Improving the Core Services Program

County Commissions shared a wide range of recommendations for continuing to enhance the impact of the Core Services Program. These recommendations fell into 3 categories:

1. Increase Resources
2. Improve documentation
3. Increase flexibility in use of Core Services funding.

Increased resources are sought to address needs in Special Economic Assistance (higher per family limit), increased access to mental health and substance abuse services and increased funding for specialized service providers such as multilingual/multicultural providers, sexual abuse treatment, and evidence based practice providers.

Recommendations related to **improved documentation** came from the counties with the largest populations. In this area, suggestions included a more standardized and reliable outcome reporting mechanism and instituting a requirement that services and cost data be linked directly to a specific child (not a single child representing an entire family). The intent underlying these recommendations is to provide reliable cost and outcomes data that can lead to a maximally efficient Core Services Program.

However, some rural counties suggest varying requirements based on the needs of individual counties, including the ability to attach costs to a family and not a specific individual. This would support rural counties by maximizing flexibility in meeting broad family needs and minimizing limited caseworker time spent on data entry and not with families.

As a whole, the Family Preservation/Core Services County Commission Reports recognize and applaud the current high level of **flexibility in the Core Services Program**. However, many counties suggest increased flexibility in specific areas. These include the ability to use Core Services funding during the assessment phase to provide early intervention services (i.e. prior to opening a case).

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Observations and Recommendations

This final section presents a brief discussion, on a broader scale, of some observations and recommendations emerging from this report.

Observations

The Core Services Program is Working – Data analyzed and presented in this report tell us that the Core Services Program is successfully addressing its mission to strengthen Colorado families and keep children and families together. Based on the range of information available to this evaluation, the Core Services Program is functioning as intended, serving the children and families targeted by the authorizing legislation and providing appropriate services and support.

> The Core Services Program is successfully serving the children and families of Colorado.

One specific indication of success is that, overall, children are being maintained in their homes while participating in Core Services. Only seven percent (7%) of children were placed out of home during their Core Service episode. A similarly small percentage of children (8%) had Core Services that ended due to an out of home placement.

Another indicator of success is that 85 percent of children served did not return for additional services in the 12 months after their Core Services episode ended. In addition, the number of children placed out of home in the 12 months after participation in Core Services declined from 49 to 21 percent.

Need for Greater Integration of Risk and Needs Assessment with Case Planning – The Core Services Program serves children who have complex and often multiple risk factors for out of home placement. Currently, the general level and type of risk is recorded in the Imminent Risk Section of the Family Services Plan by the child's caseworker, and the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS) is used in Child Protection Cases. However, the Program does not require a comprehensive, empirically validated risk and needs assessment tool to guide placement and case planning decisions for all children. Effective tools, like the NCFAS or Child and Adolescent Strengths and Needs (CANS) can gauge not only the child's level of risk, but also the specific areas where services are needed to mitigate that risk and support safety

and stability. Program-wide use of a standardized, validated risk and needs assessment in case planning would support consistent decisions regarding the intensity and restrictiveness, as well as types of services. This would allow more consistent matching of services to child and family needs and enhance quality assurance and evaluation efforts.

Reported Decrease in the Number of Children Served – Data point to a slight decline in the number of children served and the number of service authorizations recorded in Trails over the past two years. One possible explanation is that workload increases have resulted in less data being entered into the statewide data system, thereby undercounting the actual number of children being served. It is possible that children with less severe needs have been diverted from Core Services and served through community partnerships like Collaborative Management. Another possibility is that more comprehensive, evidence based services and promising practices are being provided so that the same amount of resources are used to serve fewer children but with more intensive services. However, without consistent use of a standardized risk and needs assessment and consistent data entry, a definitive statement

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cannot be made. Core Services Program Coordinators will be engaging in discussions over the coming months to explore this issue.

Challenges of Cost Calculations – Costs per child remain difficult to determine due to inconsistent data entry into Trails and variance in the methods of service payment practices across counties (fee for service, fixed rate contracts, county provided). Consistent data entry practices across counties would allow for accurate estimates of costs per child and cost comparisons across multiple factors.

Challenges in Rural Communities – Challenges faced by Core Services Program Commissions in the many rural and frontier communities of Colorado are significant. These include finding and retaining qualified providers, particularly for evidence based services and promising practices; maintaining access to specialized services (e.g., multilingual/multicultural providers, sexual abuse treatment) when the need from year to year is unpredictable; and limited access and increased expense because of long distances between communities. Lack of transportation remains a primary challenge (also noted by urban counties as a challenge).

Recommendations

We recommend that Trails data experts are utilized to investigate potential data system and data entry improvements to increase consistency across counties regarding the children and services entered into Trails. Consistent data entry is a necessary prerequisite to understanding costs, effectiveness and cost savings of the Core Services Program

We recommend that the Core Services Program Coordinators and leadership continue to explore the integration of an empirically validated risk and needs assessment into all case planning decisions. Tools like the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (used in Colorado in Child Protection Cases) or the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths assessment (CANS) are used in many states to support responsive case planning that matches service intensity and restrictiveness to child and family risk levels while also matching specific service types to the identified needs of children and their families. This comprehensive approach to risk and needs

assessment supports consistency in matching services to child and family needs and provides
valid data for program monitoring and improvement as well as evaluation and reporting.

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Appendix A

Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Report
Fiscal Year 2008-2009

**Colorado County/Tribe
name:**

Contact Person for Questions about the Commission Report:

Name:

Title:

Phone:

E-mail:

TriWest Group is a Colorado-based evaluation company selected to work with The Colorado
Department of Human Services to conduct the evaluation of the Family Preservation/Core
Services Program and prepare the Department's annual Family Preservation Commission Report.

Each year, local Family Preservation Commissions are required to complete a report on the status of Core Services and the programs available in each County. The information you provide through the attached report template will be combined with other sources of information including the Colorado Trails database to form the content for the required annual report. Input from local Family Preservation Commissions provides a context for the quantitative data elements and represents an opportunity for your County to tell the story behind the numbers.

INSTRUCTIONS

• Please return completed report by **June 30th**.

• Please be sure to include complete contact information above in case we have any questions or there are problems with the transmission of the report to us.

• If possible, please complete the report electronically using MS Word and email completed reports to **Erin Hall** at ehall@triwestgroup.net

• If e-mail submission is not convenient for you, please fax the report to XXX or mail to XXX

• Please call Erin at **303-544-0509, extension 7** with any questions about the report.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this report!

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Capacity and Array of Services

1. If County Designed Services were available, please describe the types of services:

2. Please place a check mark next to the phrase that best describes current service capacity and access. (Check all that apply)

_____The menu of Core Services available in our county (tribal area) is adequate to address the needs of children at imminent risk of placement.

_____There are services needed in our area that are not currently available.

_____Needed services are available, but not at adequate capacity (there are waiting lists).

_____Needed services are available, but there are significant barriers to a family accessing
        services.

_____Other (please describe):

Please describe services that are needed but not available (if any):

Please describe any services for which there are waiting lists and steps taken/being taken
to resolve:

Please describe the primary barriers to service access for the families you serve:

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Overall Effectiveness of Core Services

3. Please describe your perspective regarding the overall effectiveness of Core Services:

*(the following sub-questions are optional, to give you an opportunity to share more about
the work in your county/tribe)*

Are there any specific successes or failures you would like to share?

Is your county (tribe) implementing any innovative services?

Are there observations regarding impacts on children, youth and families in your county (tribe) that you would like to share?

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4. Please describe the policy and program issues in your county that are affecting out-of-home placements (feel free to add more than the three spaces provided here). Are these issues driving increases or reductions in placements?

Issue #1: _____ is driving
_____increases _____reductions in placements?
Please describe:

Issue #2: _____ is driving
_____increases _____reductions in placements?
Please describe:

Issue #3: _____ is driving
_____increases _____reductions in placements?

Please describe:

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5. Please describe the policy and program issues in your county that affect the length of stay for
   children placed out of home. Are these issues driving increases or reductions in length of
   stay?

Issue #1: _____ is driving
_____increases _____decreases in length of stay?

Please describe:

Issue #2: _____ is driving

_____increases _____decreases in length of stay?

Please describe:

Issue #3: _____ is driving

_____increases _____decreases in length of stay?

Please describe:

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6. Has the Core Services funding affected your county's Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
   scores for stability in placement?

Yes ___ No ___ (If yes, please describe).

Collaboration

7. Please check the following collaborative efforts in which your county/tribe participates?
   (check all that apply)

   ___Family to Family
   ___Promoting Safe and Stable Families
   ___HB1451
   ___Collaborative efforts incorporating Family to Family principles (but not a formal site)
   ___Other collaborative efforts (please describe):

8. Please describe how your collaboration efforts have impacted the overall effectiveness of
   your Core Services Program.

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9. Please describe how your collaboration efforts have impacted the cost-efficiency (either cost-
   avoidance or cost-savings) of your Core Services delivery.

10. If your county could change and/or modify the Core Services Program, what would you recommend?

11. Does your County's Family Preservation/Core Services Commission have any recommended changes to the annual Commission Report?

Yes ___ No ___ (If yes, please describe).

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12. Which services in your county (tribe) were supplemented with funds from outside sources?

12.1. Please indicate those services in the table below and the source of supplemental funds. If you are not sure of the actual amount, please estimate the percentage of the Core Services that were funded from that source.

Core Service Programs	Supplemented Services with Outside Funds?	Source of Funding and Amount
Home Based Intervention	Yes ___ No ___	
Intensive Family Therapy	Yes ___ No ___	
Life Skills	Yes ___ No ___	
Day Treatment	Yes ___ No ___	
Sexual Abuse Treatment	Yes ___ No ___	
Mental Health Services	Yes ___ No ___	
Substance Abuse Treatment Services	Yes ___ No ___	
Aftercare Services	Yes ___ No ___	
County Designed Services	Yes ___ No ___	

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Membership of Family Preservation Commission:

Signature of the Commission Chair

Appendix B

Core Services: Detailed Descriptions and Local Availability

Home-Based Intervention services are provided primarily in the home of the client and include therapeutic, concrete and collateral services as well as crisis intervention, depending on the needs of the child and family. Studies have shown that certain home-based interventions provided by nurse practitioners (e.g., Nurse-Family Partnerships, The Family Connections Project) have a positive effect on child abuse and neglect cases and future child behavior problems (WSIPP, 2007). In addition, emerging evidence indicates that these kinds of programs are also effective in preventing or reducing involvement in the child welfare system (WSIPP, 2008). Intensive Family Preservation services (in-home crisis intervention services) have been shown to prevent or reduce child welfare involvement (WSIPP, 2008).

Two counties (Eagle and Pitkin) reported that they do not have home-based intervention services available. One county (Boulder) noted that they would like to expand capacity of home based teams to provide immediate family coaching services in order to prevent most out of home placements.

Intensive Family Therapy programs typically involve intervention with all family members and aim to improve family communication, functioning and relationships. Some specific intensive family therapy programs (such as Multisystemic Therapy and Functional Family Therapy(FFT)) have been shown to be effective in reducing family problems, juvenile delinquency, and substance use and have also been shown to be cost-effective (Washington State Institute for Public Policy, 2007). Studies are currently underway regarding the effects of Multisystemic Therapy on subsequent child abuse and neglect. Another family therapy program, Parent–Child Interaction Therapy, has been shown to be cost-effective in preventing or reducing child welfare involvement (WSIPP, 2008).

Four counties (6%) reported they do not have intensive family therapy services available. The proportion of counties providing Intensive Family Therapy has varied over the last three fiscal years, from 88% (06/07) to 98% (07/08) and 94% (08/09).

Life Skills programs are generally provided in the home and teach household management, accessing community resources, parenting techniques, and family conflict management. Life skills training is a component in many successful child welfare programs, including various nurse home-visitation programs and the Triple-P Positive Parenting Program (WSIPP, 2008).

Three counties (5%) do not have life skills training services available. The proportion of counties providing like skills has varied slightly from 94% (06/07) to 98% (07/08) and 95% (08/09).

Day Treatment programs are comprehensive, highly structured services that provide education to children and therapy to children and their families. One example is the Chicago Child Parent Centers program, which provides a government-paid pre-school and kindergarten program that also provides parenting assistance and helps involve parents in their child's learning. The program has shown promising child safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes and has been identified as a cost-effective program in preventing or reducing involvement with the child welfare system.

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Forty percent of counties (26 counties) reported no day treatment services were available for children. This represents a slight decrease (2 fewer counties 08/09) in availability of this service for the second consecutive fiscal year. However, in addition to the 44 counties that reported having day treatment programs, three counties indicated they provide day treatment alternatives in their county designed services. Another county reported that funds are set aside in case day treatment is needed, but there is not a local program available. For many of the Western Slope rural counties, Colorado West Mental Health has a day treatment program (described as "well developed") that is utilized by multiple counties.

Sexual Abuse Treatment refers to therapeutic intervention designed to address issues and behaviors related to sexual abuse victimization, sexual dysfunction, sexual abuse perpetration, and prevention of further sexual abuse and victimization.

Six counties (9%) reported that sexual abuse treatment services were not available. The percentage of counties providing this service dropped slightly last fiscal year from 95% (08/09) to 91%, yet remains much higher than the 75% reported in the previous year (06/07). Some of the counties rely on programs run by other counties because of the large expense of these services. Many contract with private providers that offer services for victims of sexual abuse; however, fewer counties reported access to providers who specialize in sexual offense-specific treatment.

Mental Health Services include diagnostic and/or therapeutic services to assist in the development of the family services plan, and to assess and/or improve family communication, functioning and relationships. Because this category is broad in the types of services included, it is difficult to make comparisons with evidence based practices. However, one county did report that parenting skills training and home visitation (two strategies generally proven effective) were included in mental health services.

No counties reported that mental health services were not available to children and families. Many contract for these services through their local community mental health center or regional Behavioral Health Organization (BHO), or participate in a multiple county contract for services. One rural county reported that there is a gap in service because the BHO services do not meet local needs.

Substance Abuse Treatment Services include diagnostic and therapeutic services to assist in the development of the family services plan, to assess and/or improve family communication, functioning and relationships, and to prevent further abuse of drugs or alcohol. One substance abuse-focused program, the Family Treatment Drug Court in California, has shown positive effects in reducing child abuse, number of OOH placements and permanent OOH placement (WSIPP, 2008).

All but two counties (Eagle and Gunnison) reported that substance abuse treatment services were available in their counties. Nearly all counties (97%) provide substance abuse treatment services to children and families. Many rural counties provide shared services, in multi-county plans or through their regional MHSA. One county reported that local MHSA substance abuse providers are not Certified Addictions Counselors (CAC) and, therefore, services are inadequate. One county reported that they are in the process of redesigning substance abuse

services for their adolescent population.

County Designed Services are provided as part of the Core Services Program and are designed by counties to meet specific local needs. Nearly three-fourths (74%) of the counties

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reported using county designed services to meet the needs of children and families in their communities.

As mentioned in the discussion of day treatment programs, many counties use county designed programs to provide more locally appropriate services for children who would otherwise receive traditional day treatment. In addition, county designed services often include evidence based practices such as mentoring, Multisystemic Therapy, Functional Family Therapy (FFT), Parents as Teachers, Family Treatment Drug Court, Dialectic Behavior Therapy (DBT), Wraparound, and nurse home visitation programs.

County designed services are also used to serve populations who may not benefit from traditional treatment or therapy programs. For example, three (3) counties have implemented play therapy programs for young children who do not yet possess the verbal or reasoning skills needed for traditional therapy approaches. Several counties have implemented programs targeting adolescents. Examples include a mini-bike program in Larimer County where riding time on mini-bikes is used as an incentive for teenagers; a youth-centered permanency program in Arapahoe County that focuses on preparing young adults for emancipation; and a Dialectical Behavioral Treatment program designed specifically for adolescents and created as a regional county designed program in La Plata, San Juan, Montezuma, Archuleta and Dolores counties.

Table 20, below, shows county designed services as listed in each individual county Core Services plan. Programs highlighted in **bold** font are established evidence based programs (EBP) that have been proven to be effective either in reducing family involvement with the child welfare system or in reducing child problem behaviors. Programs highlighted with *italics* either share program features with a named EBP but have not necessarily been specifically named as effective programs, or have been documented as promising or research based programs in the core services plans submitted to Child Welfare. Please note that these classifications are based on information provided in county Family Preservation/Core Services Commission Reports. Additional programs in this list may be based on EBPs, but were not classified as such due to lack of information. For example, some programs were listed by the name used locally without description of the service.

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Table 20: County Designed Programs

County	Service Type on Core Plan
Adams	*Supervised Therapeutic Visitation Service* *Youth Intervention Program*
Alamosa	Discovery Group Family Decision Making/Conferences *Intensive Mentoring Program*
Arapahoe	**Multisystemic Therapy- Synergy** **Multisystemic Therapy - Savio Direct Link Program** *Family Group Conferencing (Youth Centered Permanency, LINKS)*
Archuleta	Intermediate/Middle School/High School Responsibility/Mentoring
Baca	None
Bent	None
Boulder	Adoption Counseling *Community Evaluation Team (CET)* Family Group Decision Making
Broomfield	Day Treatment Alternative **Multisystemic Therapy**
Chaffee	*Chaffee County Mentoring* Youth at Crossroads
Cheyenne	None
Clear Creek	None
Conejos	*Intensive Mentoring*
Costilla	*Intensive Mentoring Project*
Crowley	None
Custer	None
Delta	*Mentoring* *Multisystemic Therapy – Local modification called Family* *Intervention Team* Day Treatment Alternative
Denver	Emerson Street School – alternative school **Multisystemic Therapy** Savio Direct Link Program Denver Effect/Family Outreach Domestic Violence Intervention *Team Decision Making* *Supervised Visitation*
Dolores	Day Treatment Alternative
Douglas	None
Eagle	None

Elbert	**Multisystemic Therapy**
	Family Coaching/Youth Mentoring
	Youth Mentoring
El Paso	Mediation Services
	Nurturing Program
	Day Treatment Alternative
	Domestic Violence
	Functional Family Therapy
	Multisystemic Therapy

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Table 20: County Designed Programs

County	Service Type on Core Plan
Fremont	Day Treatment Alternative
	Family Group Conferencing
	Adolescent Support Group
	Functional Family Therapy
	Parenting Skills
	Supervised Visitation
	Family Treatment Drug Court
	Nurturing Foster Care Support Group
Garfield	*Adolescent Mediation*
Gilpin	None
Grand	*Day Treatment Alternative*
	Parent Child Visitation
	Parenting Time/Supervision
Gunnison	Therapeutic Mentoring
Hinsdale	Therapeutic Mentoring
Huerfano	Reconnecting Youth
Jackson	Day Treatment Alternative
Jefferson	**Multisystemic Therapy**
	Team Decision Making
Kiowa	None
Kit Carson	**Functional Family Therapy**
Lake	Intensive Family Therapy (IFT)/School Partnership
La Plata	Play Therapy
	Multisystemic Therapy
	Adolescent Dialectical Behavioral Treatment (DBT)
Larimer	Foster Care/Kin/Adoption Support Groups
	Multisystemic Therapy
	Nat'l Youth Project Using Mini-Bikes (NYPUM)
	Functional Family Therapy (FFT)
	Parent Child Conflict Mediation
	Family Options 1 – Family Safety and Resource Team
	Family Options 2 – Family Unity Meetings
	Family Options 3 – Family Group Conferencing
	Substance Abuse Petty Offenders
	Youth Intervention Program

                               Youth Services
                               Nurturing Program - Life Nurse Visiting Program
                               Community Based Family Services and Support
                               Child Mentoring and Family Support

County	Service
Las Animas	None
Lincoln	Family Group Conference
	Foster Care\Adoption Support Program
Logan	Play Therapy
Mesa	*Structured/Supervised Parenting Time*
	Day Treatment to Adolescents
	Rapid Response
Moffat	*Day Treatment Alternative*
Mineral	None
Montezuma	Day Treatment Alternative
	Adolescent Dialectical Behavioral Treatment (DBT)

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Table 20: County Designed Programs

County	Service Type on Core Plan
Montrose	*Promoting Healthy Adolescents Trends PHAT*
Morgan	Structured Parenting Time
	Day Treatment Alternative
	Family Group Decision Making
Otero	Play Therapy
Ouray/San Miguel	Day Treatment Alternative
Park	None
Phillips	None
Pitkin	None
Prowers	None
Pueblo	Visitation Center
	For Keeps Program
Rio Blanco	*Day Treatment Alternative*
Rio Grande/Mineral	*None*
Routt	*Day Treatment Alternative*
Saguache	None
San Juan	**Multisystemic Therapy**
	Adolescent Dialectical Behavioral Treatment (DBT)
Sedgwick	None
Summit	Youth Outreach /Mediation
	Day Treatment Alternative
	Mentor Supported Substance Abuse Treatment for Adolescents
	Multisystemic Therapy
	Team Decision Making
Teller	**Multisystemic Therapy**
Washington	Foster Care/Adoption Intervention
Weld	*Teamwork, Innovation, Growth, Hope and Training (TIGHT)*
	Multisystemic Therapy
	Foster Parent Consultation

Functional Family Therapy

Yuma   None

Southern Ute Indian Tribe   **Multisystemic Therapy**

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Appendix C

Evidenced Based Services Allocation

Some counties receive additional Core Services funding specifically targeted to provide evidence based services to adolescents in home and community-based settings. Evidence based services are programs that have been proven effective in reducing the need for higher cost residential services. These programs help counties avoid or reduce the length of costly out-of-home placement when appropriate.

Evidence based services are often more costly (though not always) to provide in the short term while producing cost savings over the longer term. Recognizing the value of continuing these services and the additional financial burden to counties, the state and the department appropriated $1.5 million dollars to Core Services in SFY 2003-2004 to mitigate county over-expenditures on evidence based programs.

This additional funding was doubled and allocated for the same purpose in SFY 2004-2005 and increased again in January 2005 by $750,000. Since that time the allocation has remained in the budget at just over $4 million.

Funds are allocated to counties through an application and award process. In order to receive funds counties must apply for funding, include the evidence based program in their annual Core Services Plan as a county designed service and the service must target adolescents. Counties must put

The $4,088,723 has been allocated as 80/20 funds. Each county must put forward a 20% investment in order to utilize the additional funds.

forward 20% to match the state's 80% contribution and the funds cannot be used to supplant existing county contributions to Core Services.

To continue to receive an evidence based services award, Core Services Program Coordinators need to submit a complete program needs assessment, service description and projected outcomes. They must also document historical outcomes showing how these specific county designed services reduce the need for higher costs of more restrictive settings or residential services.

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Appendix D

Additional Funding Sources

As mentioned previously, additional funds were often added to Core Services Program in order to provide needed services to Core Services families. Table 21, below, shows the number of counties using additional funds for each type of Core Service and an estimated dollar amount. In all cases, the number of counties included in the dollar amount is less than the number of counties reporting use of additional funds. The reason for this discrepancy is not all counties reporting use of additional funds were able to provide specific dollar amounts.

Table 21: Counties Using Additional Funds to Provide Core Services

Core Service Type	Counties Using Additional Funds	Estimated Additional Funds as Reported
Home Based Intervention	18 (27%)	$ 2,065,000 (10 counties included)[28]
Intensive Family Therapy	17 (26%)	$ 184,000 (9 counties included)
Life Skills	15 (23%)	$ 210,000 (9 counties included)

Day Treatment	14 (21%)	$ 1,006,000 (6 counties included)
Sexual Abuse Treatment	7 (11%)	$ 30,000 (1 county included)
Mental Health Services	21 (32%)	$ 773,000 (12 counties included)
Substance Abuse Treatment Services	26 (40%)	$ 430,000 (10 counties included)
Aftercare Services	6 (9%)	$ 161,000 (2 counties included)
County Designed Services	19 (29%)	$ 326,000 (2 counties included)
TOTAL	**45**[29] **(68%)**	**$6,221,000**[30] **(27 counties included)**

As shown in the table above, 41 counties acquried additional funding to provide needed Core Servcies. Table 22, below lists the sources of additional funds as reported by counties.

[28] Some counties included a dollar amount for each specific type of Core Service. Others included a percentage and some reported that they used additional funding but did not include a dollar amount specific to each service type.
[29] Total number of counties is not equal to the sum of the numbers above because most counties use additional funds for more than one type of service.
[30] Total amount does not equal the sum of the estimates because some counties reported a total amount of additional funding and did not include estimates for each type of service. Therefore, these amounts are included in the total and not in the estimates.

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Table 22: Sources of Additional Funds Identified in Core Services Commission Reports

- Health Care Policy and Finance (HFPF) – Additional Case Management Fund
- Asset Forfeiture Dollars
- Catholic Charities
- Child Development Service Fund
- County Governments
- Division of Behavioral Health-Additional Family Services (AFS)
- Excess IV-E Funding
- Family to Family
- Fund Raisers

- Grants
  - Access to Recovery
  - Child Welfare Block Grant
  - Federal Grants
  - Gates Foundation
  - Local grants
  - VALE Grants
- Healthier Communities Fund
- House Bill 1414
- House Bill 1451
- Judicial Districts

- Local Boards of Cooperative Education
- Local Departments of Public Health
- Local Mental Health Centers
- Local Nonprofit Organizations
- Local School Districts
- Medicaid covered services
- Parent Fees
- Promoting Safe and Stable Families
- Senate Bill 94
- Southern Ute Community Action Program
- Special Property Tax
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families/Colorado Works

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Appendix E

Success Stories

The following success stories are presented as included in Family Preservation/Core Servcies County Commission Reports and serve as only two example of several stories that were submitted this year.

Success Story #1
As a Life Skills worker, I was given the opportunity to work with a family comprised of a dad and two daughters. When this family came to the attention of the department, the dad tested positive for drugs and the mother's whereabouts were unknown. The children were placed in foster care and the dad began his drug treatment.

After three months the oldest daughter was returned to her dad while the younger daughter resided with her grandparents. The dad continued in treatment and I began working with him and his daughter. The dad developed a relationship of trust between the [case] worker and me and worked hard on maintaining a place for the family to live, applied for food stamps and continued to be successful in his drug treatment. He got up early every morning and he and his daughter took public transportation to the school. He could have arranged for a school bus, but his daughter wanted to spend the time with him. They developed a good relationship.

While working with the Life Skills Program, he took advantage of learning good parenting skills and became both a mother and a father for his girls. The mother of the children did come back into the children's lives and tried to engage in her own treatment of counseling. After many months of court hearings the dad was given custody of the girls. After the children were returned home and the case was successfully closed the mother passed away due to her choice of lifestyle and not being able to stop using drugs.

This was a very trying time for the dad but he was able to work through his own pain and be there for his children. This [case] worker referred the client to [a local non-profit agency] and he continues to work with them. He has completed computer classes and he is scheduled to test for his GED. [This community agency] was able to have his hearing tested and he is waiting for his new hearing aid. They are also helping him to apply for Social Security Benefits and he is planning on moving into his own apartment that is close to his daughter's school. He is also starting self-esteem classes through the [same agency]. He oldest daughter finished 4th grade with excellent grades and will be starting 5th grade in the fall. The youngest daughter will start kindergarten. He has remained drug free and has built a support system that he can utilize when he needs it.

Success Story #2
[A teenage girl] came into [our] Program depressed, anxious and withdrawn. She was failing most of her classes, engaging in self-harming behaviors (cutting), having suicidal thoughts, and was socially isolated. She was at risk for out of home placement and dropping out of school. She described herself as "invisible." That was seven months ago.

Today, she is a different girl.

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Through [this program she] participated in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) Skills Group twice weekly, Individual Therapy weekly, Family Therapy twice monthly, received academic support daily and had daily validating social interactions with peers in the program. [The program] became her therapeutic, academic and social outlet. She thrived, and she was able to experience enough support to stay in her home.

Last trimester, she passed all of her classes (she had the highest grade in her math class!), she reported no incidents of self harm since February, no suicidal thoughts, limited depression symptoms, reduced anxiety and increased social confidence.

In her last individual therapy session, she reported, "I feel like a different girl." Through intense therapeutic intervention in group, family and individual settings, [this young person] has come a

long way in a short time. Why? She learned skills to use in daily stressful situations; she became emotionally regulated, gained interpersonal relationship skills, had validating experiences daily and was able to communicate her needs in appropriate ways.

She no longer felt invisible.

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