



# **2012-2014 Strategic Plan**

***Adopted on  
December 13, 2011***

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### *Mission*

Promoting the development and well-being of children 0 through 5



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### *Vision*

All of Stanislaus County's children will thrive in supportive, safe, nurturing, and loving environments; are healthy, eager, and ready learners; and become productive well-adjusted members of society.



The first 5 years of a child's life are critical because early experiences shape how a child's brain grows and develops. Early childhood development research shows that a child's brain develops more rapidly during those first 5 years than at any other time. The environment in which a child lives, plays, and learns has an enormous effect on the rest of his or her life.

The Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission is dedicated to promoting children's development and well-being by supporting programs that make a difference in the emotional, physical, and intellectual experiences in a child's first 5 years. Every year, the Commission invests millions of dollars in vital services for children 0 through 5 and their families in the areas of health, safety, family support, and child development.

Coordinated, long range, strategic decisions need to be made about the areas where Proposition 10 resources can best be used.

A Strategic Plan is the vehicle used by the Stanislaus County Children and Families

Commission to express its focus, direction, and desired results.

An effective strategic plan takes into account the environmental factors that inevitably affect the implementation of the strategic plan and the progress towards countywide goals. The Commission recognizes that Stanislaus County and its population are unique, and the following sections of this Plan reflect the distinctive qualities and challenges of our county:

- 📌 The county and its children – including race/ethnicity and languages spoken
- 📌 Proposition 10 and the Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission formed under the law
- 📌 The strategic planning process
- 📌 Areas of focus, results, and objectives
- 📌 Services currently funded
- 📌 Funding criteria
- 📌 Planned expenditures
- 📌 How programs will be evaluated

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to express, explain, and describe the Commission's mission and vision in a manner that will guide future operational and funding decisions.

## About Stanislaus County and its Young Children

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Stanislaus County is located in the heart of Central California in the San Joaquin Valley. There are diverse geographic and cultural areas within the county, ranging from urban to rural and metropolitan to isolated. The communities vary in population size from under 1,000 to more than 200,000 people.<sup>1</sup> The county's rich soil and mild climate make it ideal for agricultural production, an industry with a value of over \$2.5 billion in 2010.<sup>2</sup> Agribusiness is a large component of the County's economy, and includes those businesses that are connected to agricultural production (e.g., food packing and shipping). Stanislaus County also employs a large percentage of people in education and social services, and the increasingly developing health care industry.

### Language and Race/Ethnicity Distribution

The county is home to over 540,000 people of diverse race/ethnicities. It is expected that Hispanic population growth will continue to outpace other races/ethnicities. By 2020, the general population percentage of Whites is projected to decrease to 39% while the percentage of Hispanics will increase to 50%. Asian (5%), Black (3%), American Indian (.8%), Pacific Islander (.3%), and Multi-Race (2%) populations are expected to remain fairly consistent.<sup>3</sup>



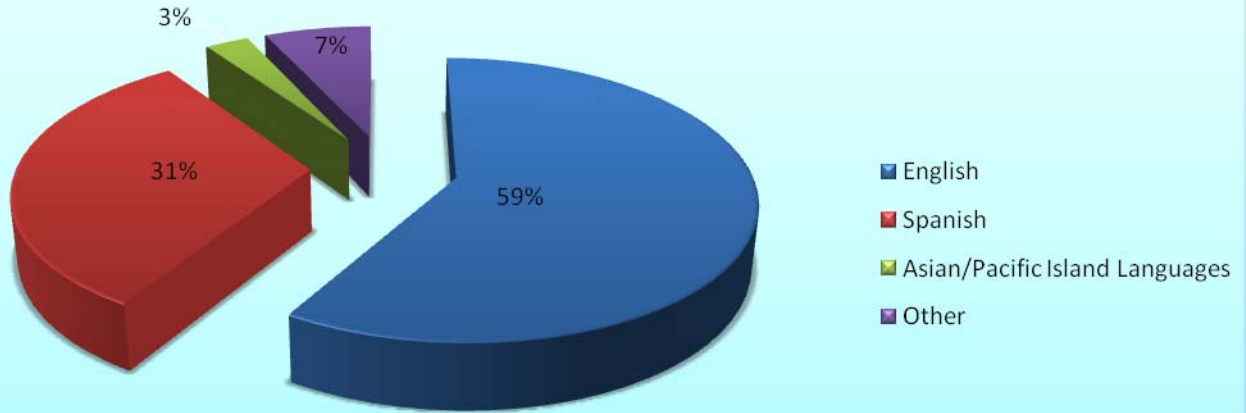
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<sup>1</sup> State of California, Dept. of Finance, E-1 Population Estimates for Cities, Counties, and the State – January 1, 2010 and 2011: Sacramento, CA, May 2011; <http://www.City-Data.com>, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> The Stanislaus County Agricultural Crop Report 2010. [www.stanag.org/crop-reports.shtml](http://www.stanag.org/crop-reports.shtml)

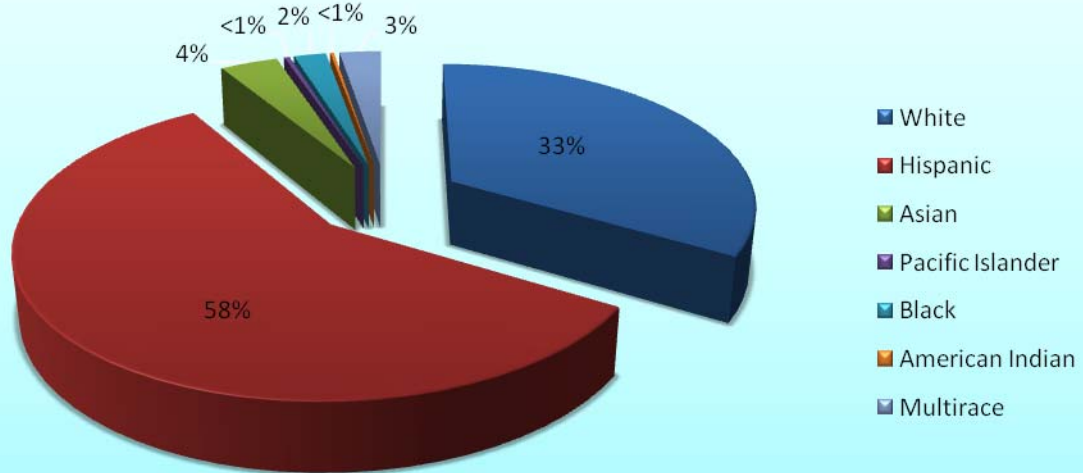
<sup>3</sup> State of California Department of Finance, Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail, 2000-2050, Sacramento, CA, July 2007.

## Primary Language of Stanislaus County Residents\*



\* Language spoken at home; U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey

## Race/Ethnicity of Stanislaus County Children 0-5








State of California, Department of Finance, *Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail, 2000–2050*. Sacramento, CA, July 2007.

## Stanislaus County's Young Children

There are 56,918 children ages 0 through 5 in Stanislaus County, comprising 10.2% of the population.<sup>4</sup> These children are affected by multiple countywide challenges, some of which are identified below.

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 <b>Families are experiencing high unemployment rates</b>	<i>Unemployment Rates (annual average)<sup>5</sup></i> 2010 – 17.4% 2009 – 15.9% 2008 – 11.0% 2007 – 8.6%
 <b>Low birth weights and high infant mortality rates continue to be concerns</b>	In 2009, 6.5% of all live births were born at a low birth weight <sup>6</sup> (consistently high since 2003).  In 2009, the infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births was 5.7 compared to the state rate of 4.9 <sup>7</sup>
 <b>Families with children are going without basic needs</b>	18% of the respondents of a community survey reported that they had to go without basic needs during the past year (ASR). <sup>8</sup>  In a previous survey that delineated 1,149 respondents with children 0-5, 51% went without basic needs during the past 12 months <sup>9</sup>
 <b>Children do not attend preschool regularly</b>	Only 10.3% of children 0-5 attended a preschool program at least 10 hours per week <sup>10</sup>
 <b>Children 0-5 are living in poverty</b>	53.8% of children 0-5 fall below 200% of the federal poverty level <sup>11</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> State of California, Department of Finance, *2000-2050 Race/Ethnic Population with Age and Sex Detail*. Sacramento, CA, July 2007.

<sup>5</sup> Employment Development Department, *Historical Data for Unemployment Rate and Labor Force (not seasonally adjusted) in Stanislaus County, 2010*

<sup>6</sup> Applied Survey Research, *Kaiser Permanente 2010 Data Report, Stanislaus County, 2010*

<sup>7</sup> State of California, Department of Health Services, *Death and Birth Records, 2010*

<sup>8</sup> Applied Survey Research, *Kaiser Permanente 2010 Data Report, Stanislaus County, 2010*

<sup>9</sup> Applied Survey Research, *Stanislaus County Community Health Assessment, 2008*

<sup>10</sup> UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, *California Health Interview Survey, 2009*

<sup>11</sup> UCLA Center for Health Policy Research, *California Health Interview Survey, 2009*



## Proposition 10 – California’s Children and Families Act

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In November of 1998, California voters passed Proposition 10, an initiative popularly known as the California Children and Families Act. The initiative’s goal is simple: to help ensure that our youngest children, from prenatal through five years of age, get the best possible start in life. The ballot measure added a tax of 50 cents per pack on all cigarettes purchased in the state and a comparable tax on other tobacco products. The revenues collected are used to create and supplement education, health, and childcare programs that promote early childhood development.

The purpose, intent, and duties of the Commission (which were codified as Sections 130100 through 130155 of the State of California Health and Safety Code) are as follows:

- ✦ Facilitate the creation and implementation of an integrated, comprehensive, and collaborative system of information and services to enhance optimal early childhood development and to ensure children are ready to enter school
- ✦ Provide greater local flexibility in designing delivery systems and to eliminate duplicate administrative systems
- ✦ Use outcome-based accountability systems to determine future expenditures

Revenues generated by the Proposition 10 tax are deposited into the State California Children and Families Trust Fund. It is estimated that \$500 million will be collected in 2011-2012, and Stanislaus County’s share of the collections will be approximately \$5,400,000. Future revenues are expected to decrease as a result of decreased tobacco usage and decreased interest income (due to a smaller reserve).



## About Stanislaus County's Commission

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Following voter approval of Proposition 10 in November 1998, the Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission was established by the Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors on December 8, 1998, pursuant to Ordinance #687. The ordinance provides that the Commission shall operate as an independent "County agency". The governing board of the Commission, which is appointed by the Board of Supervisors, is comprised as follows:



- ✎ 1 Member of the Commission shall be a member of the Board of Supervisors
- ✎ 1 Member of the Commission shall be a County Health Officer
- ✎ 2 Members of the Commission shall be two of the following County Department Heads: Health Services Agency Director, Behavioral Health and Recovery Services Director, Community Services Agency Director
- ✎ 1 Member shall be a representative of a local school district
- ✎ 4 Members shall be community representatives

The Commission, which meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, adopts a strategic plan, establishes policy direction, and exercises general oversight of the programs and contracts funded with Proposition 10 funds. It relies on its appointed Executive Director to conduct day-to-day operations and supervise Commission staff. At least annually, the Commission reviews its:

- ✎ Strategic plan
- ✎ Priorities, results, and objectives
- ✎ Internal Evaluator's report on the progress Stanislaus programs have made towards attaining the mission and vision of the Commission as expressed through the strategic plan

### Commission Membership as of December 2011

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<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date of Original Appt.</u>	<u>Current Term Expires</u>
Christine Applegate	Community Services Agency	April 2011	Permanent
Vicki Bauman, Vice-Chair	School Representative	June 2005	August 2013
Vito Chiesa	Board of Supervisors	January 2009	December 2011
David Cooper	Community Representative	September 2006	August 2012
Denise Hunt	Community Representative	September 2011	August 2014
Mary Ann Lee	Health Services Agency	November 2007	Permanent
Nelly Paredes-Walsborn	Community Representative	September 2004	August 2013
George Skol, Chair	Community Representative	June 2002	August 2014
John Walker, MD	Public Health Officer	November 2000	Permanent

## Services Currently Funded by the Commission

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The services currently funded by the Commission are offered by a broad range of providers / organizations. The staff members of these organizations are grouped into five broad categories: community based organization staff, differential response / family resource center staff, licensed health staff, licensed mental health staff, and school staff. Direct services provided by contractors are listed below. Administrative services and services provided by Commission staff are addressed in the annual Commission budget process.



- Adult literacy classes
- Behavioral health consultation
- Case management
- Child development classes
- Child literacy classes
- Children's book distribution
- Community outreach
- Depression screenings
- Developmental screenings
- Family literacy
- Family crisis support services
- Group mental / behavioral health services
- Health and safety classes
- Health insurance enrollment services
- Health screenings
- Individual mental / behavioral health services
- Interim outpatient health care
- Kindergarten transition services
- Oral health education
- Oral health screenings and varnish
- Parent-child interactive classes
- Parenting classes
- Pregnancy / infant intense services
- Pregnancy / infant support groups
- Public awareness campaigns for health and safety
- Resource and referral services
- Resources and trainings for unlicensed child care providers

## About the Strategic Planning Process

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In November of 2008, the Commission conducted a community survey to elicit community input that was considered when the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan was developed. Over 2,000 providers, program participants, and other community members completed the survey and shared their opinions regarding the needs and priorities of children 0-5 and their families in Stanislaus County. Commission staff compiled and presented this information for Commissioners to consider during the 2009-2011 strategic planning process.

At a March 2009 planning session, the Commission was guided by a consultant who facilitated the session:

- 📌 Review of Community Demographics and Statistics
- 📌 Review, Update, and Affirm
  - Mission
  - Vision
  - Priorities
- 📌 Update on Trends Impacting Strategic Planning
  - State budget, Prop 10, Prop 63, Prop 1D
  - County budget process
  - Public and private funding
- 📌 Develop Funding Criteria
  - Purpose of funding criteria
  - Discussion of level of desired impact: deep or wide
  - Discussion and selection of funding criteria
  - Discussion and selection of rating scale
- 📌 Consider and Select Funding Structure
  - Cliff scenario
  - Slope scenario
  - Level scenario



The process included rich discussions related to the community input, current conditions in Stanislaus County and the State, and additional trends and other considerations, including:

- 📌 Commissioners noted the worsening economic conditions in Stanislaus County and the nation. Economic conditions will reduce contributions to non-profit social agencies and State and County social service program revenue at the same time community needs will be increasing.
- 📌 The local economic situation will likely increase stressors on families which may manifest themselves in increased maltreatment of children, a deterioration in family relationships, and increased drug and alcohol abuse.
- 📌 In the present environment, it may not be realistic to establish goals to decrease negative outcomes for children. It may be more realistic to establish goals to maintain recent gains in improvements to outcomes for children.

- ✦ In an era of reduced Proposition 10 revenues and resources, evaluation of programs will become even more critical for accountability and sustainability purposes. Program evaluation will need to emphasize and assess the cost-effectiveness of program designs and operations, as well as the design of systems through collaborative efforts.

In August of 2011, the Commission indicated its satisfaction with the 2009-2011 Strategic Plan and concluded that the Plan has served the community well over the past three years. The Commission directed staff to update the document's statistics and references before placing the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan on the Commission's agenda for discussion and adoption. Following adoption of the Strategic Plan in December of 2011, the Commission will be considering adoption of a Priorities Plan in January of 2012 with further detail about how Commission priorities and direction from the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan will be implemented. A planning session is scheduled for January of 2012 for Commissioners and the community to discuss implementation of this Strategic Plan.



## Areas of Focus, Results, and Objectives

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The Commission focuses on providing services and producing results in the areas of family functioning, health, child development, and sustainable systems. In these areas of focus, the Commission's desired results for children 0-5 in Stanislaus County are listed below with corresponding objectives:

📌 Families are supported and safe in communities that are capable of supporting safe families

- ✓ Maintain positive trends in the reduction of repeat child maltreatment reports
- ✓ Decrease incidents of child abuse and maltreatment
- ✓ Increase positive social support for families
- ✓ Increase family resilience capacity (knowledge, skills, and awareness) to promote healthy development and safety



📌 Children are eager and ready learners

- ✓ Increase families' ability to get their children ready for school
- ✓ Increase the number of children who are cognitively and socially-behaviorally ready to enter school

📌 Children are born healthy and stay healthy

- ✓ Increase the number of high risk pregnancies that result in healthy births
- ✓ Increase community awareness and response to child health and safety issues
- ✓ Increase / maintain enrollments in health insurance products
- ✓ Maintain access and maximize utilization of children's preventive and ongoing health care

📌 Sustainable and coordinated systems are in place that promote the well-being of children 0-5

- ✓ Improve collaboration, coordination, and utilization of limited resources
- ✓ Increase the resources\* and community assets leveraged within the county
- ✓ Increase in resources coming into Stanislaus County, as a result of leveraged dollars

Each service that the Commission will fund is expected to contribute to one or more of these results by impacting the lives of program participants.

*\*The term resources, as used in this plan, is inclusive of people (human capital), money, and facilities.*

## Funding Criteria

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As the availability of funds diminishes, the Commission will make decisions about services and providers / organizations to be funded based on the following criteria.

### **When making funding decisions, the Commission will give priority to services that:**

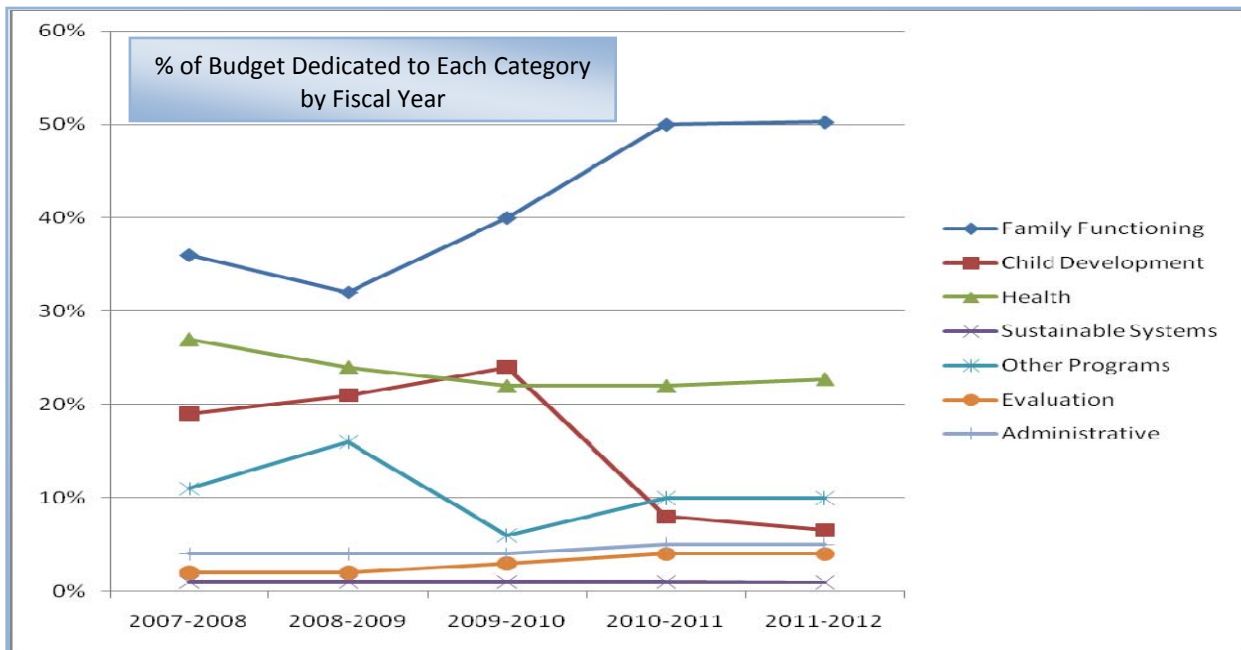
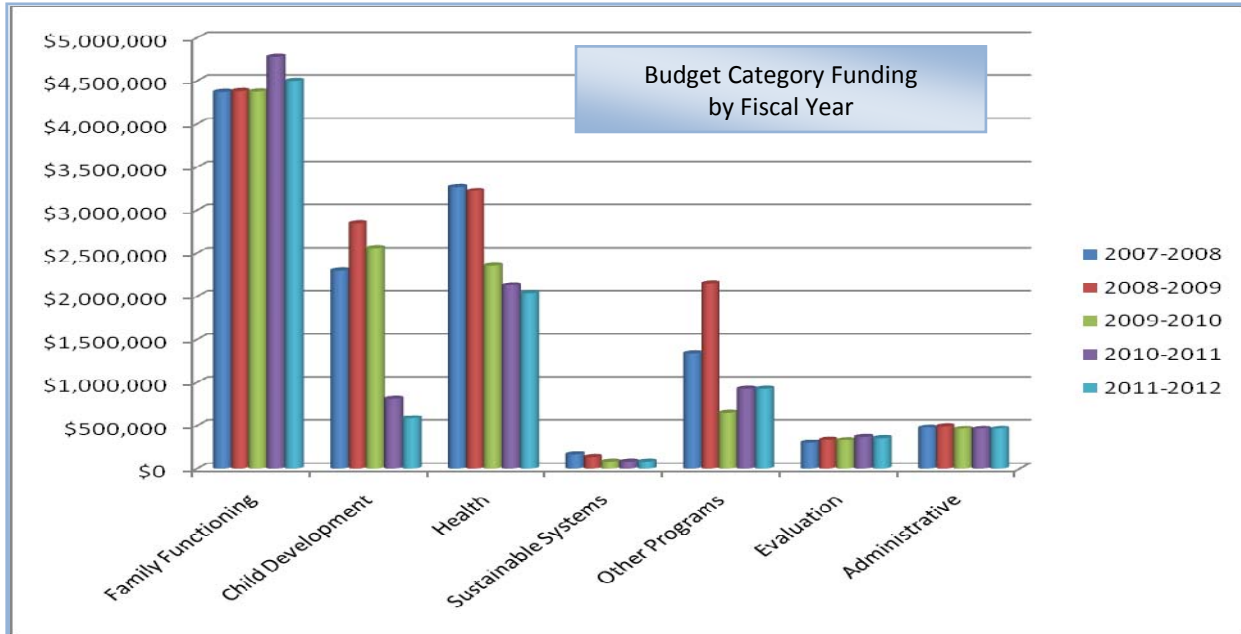
- balance prevention and long term results with immediate intervention impacts.
- are delivered at the local, community level and build community, organizational or collaborative structure capacity.
- can be delivered in various parts of the county either by different organizations in multiple communities or by one organization throughout the county.
- have a reasonable unit cost, based on similar programs and services.
- are closely related to the Commission's desired results and objectives.
- the Commission can invest in responsibly.
- are evidence-based (promising or best practice models).
- are considered high priority for the community.
- demonstrate significant participant results.
- in combination with other services, result in a viable project.
- are responsive to Commission strategies.
- are not readily available from other programs.

### **When making funding decisions, the Commission will give priority to providers / organizations that:**

- have demonstrated the ability to leverage a broad range of resources.
- have a high level of adherence to contract terms and Commission policies and procedures, and history of delivering on projects as contracted.
- are responsible and are prepared to efficiently deliver services as contracted.
- have clearly stated, realistic objectives with measureable program results.
- show stewardship and have the capacity to implement services.
- create viable projects by combining Commission funds with other resources.
- the Commission can invest in responsibly.
- use evidence-based program designs (promising or best practice models).
- are capable of developing and delivering services in a culturally proficient manner.
- demonstrate evidence of strong collaborations.
- are responsive to Commission strategies.
- have demonstrated successful sustainability efforts.

## Funding Trends

The following graphs depict trends in the Commission’s funding of services that have yielded significant countywide results over the last five fiscal years:



The trends indicate that the Commission continues to budget more for services in the areas of Family Functioning and less in Child Development, Health, and Sustainable Systems. The Commission intends to continue this trend as services are prioritized and as cost effectiveness in some areas (i.e., within Health) increase. Other Programs, Evaluation, and Administration remain at relatively low and stable levels. The Commission plans to decrease the amount of funding in those areas as total available funding decreases, maintaining an appropriate percent of the total budget for these categories.





### Overview

The balance in the Stanislaus County Children and Families Trust Fund (as of June 30, 2011) is \$6,200,000. This amount represents, as of the end of the 10-11 fiscal year, periodic allocations received from the State Trust Fund plus accumulated interest less actual expenses and less the \$8,300,000 needed to comply with AB 99 (see discussion below). It is important to note that the Commission's financial policies require a six month operating reserve be set aside from this reserve balance amount. The amount to be set aside for the six month operating reserve will vary each year since the amount is based on the Commission's annual revenue stream.

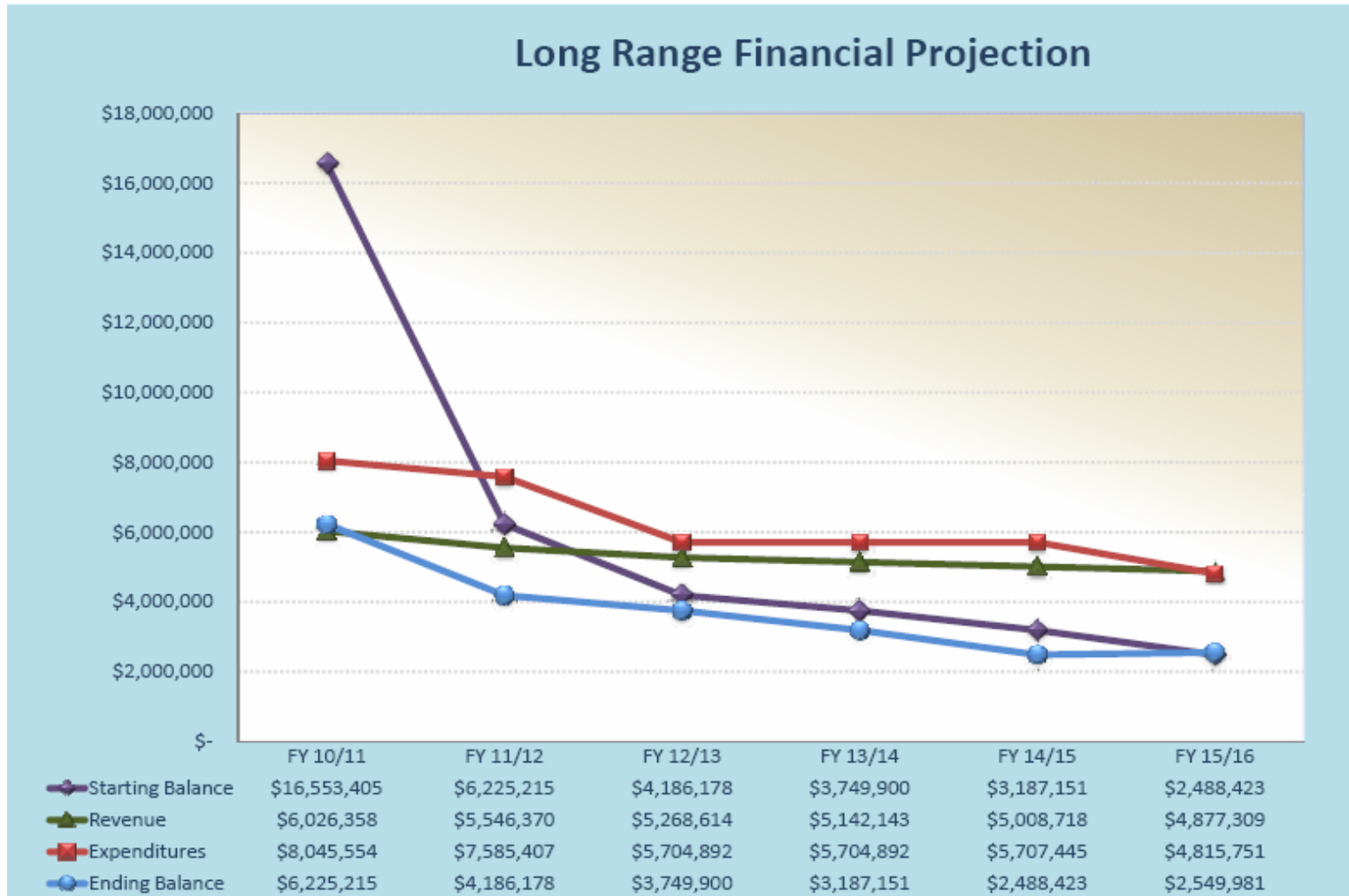
### AB 99

In March of 2011, AB 99 was enacted into law by the Legislature and the Governor. AB 99 contains a requirement that each county Children and Families Commission send 50% of its June 30, 2010 fund balance to the State of California on or before June 30, 2012 (\$8,300,000 for Stanislaus County). A suit has been brought against the State challenging the legality of AB 99 arguing that the changes enacted by the Legislature required voter approval. In late November of 2011, a Fresno Superior Court ruled that AB 99 is unconstitutional and, therefore, unenforceable. The State now has 60 days (late February) to decide whether or not to appeal the Fresno decision. Should an appeal be filed, a final decision on this matter may take years.

The Commission has decided to take a conservative approach to AB 99 by setting aside the amount of Stanislaus' estimated liability under the law (\$8,300,000) in order to have access to the funds in the event the Fresno decision is appealed and the Appellate Court upholds the legality of AB 99. Consequently, resources to fund the 2012 – 2014 Strategic Plan are less than what had been projected in previous Strategic Plans. As a result, the Commission will be unable to continue the same level of financial support for community programs and activities that was planned for in the previous Strategic Plan.

**Projections Under This Strategic Plan**

During this Strategic Plan, the Commission will use fund balance and anticipated revenues to create a stable, consistent funding level for the three years covered by this plan. The following chart illustrates this strategy.



The \$10,328,190 starting balance decrease between 10-11 and 11-12 is due to 10-11 expenditures exceeding revenues by \$2,019,196 (as was planned) and due to the deduction of \$8,308,994 for Stanislaus County’s AB 99 liability.

## Evaluation

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The Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission is dedicated to the ongoing and comprehensive evaluation of its work and that of Prop 10 funded programs in order to ensure accountability and progress towards results for children 0-5 and their families.

The California Children & Families Commission developed a results-based accountability (RBA) system in 2002, making revisions in 2006. This system tracks statewide progress and results in the areas of family functioning, child development, maternal and child health, and systems change in order to support improvement in program planning and policies, and to assist in more effective funding decisions on state and local levels. In an effort to support the State's accountability efforts, as well as the County's, the Commission established a structure to evaluate its programs in alignment with the state's result areas framework.

### Evaluation Purpose and Goals

Effective evaluation incorporates information, reflection, learning, and action. It is the systematic acquisition and analysis of information to provide useful feedback to a funded program and to support decision making about continuing or altering program operations. Evaluation is also an ongoing process in which questions are selected, framed, and answered in order to assess the value and effectiveness of programs, as well as to further strengthen and build the capacity of programs when utilized in a meaningful way.



The evaluation process is intended to answer the questions “Are Commission funded programs operating effectively and as intended?” and “To what extent have the programs affected individuals and the community as reflected in planned participant results and the strategic plan?” Simply stated, the Commission will report on how much was done, how well it was done, and if anyone is better off. During the evaluation process, the Commission acquires, reports, and analyzes information, and shares that information with stakeholders (i.e., programs, community, funders, legislators). The information is also used as a basis for decisions and action to improve programs and results.

### Evaluation Approach

The evaluation is a cooperative process between the Commission and funded contractors, each having specific responsibilities. The contractors are accountable for collecting, compiling, analyzing, and reporting data regarding their programs. The Commission is also responsible for collecting, compiling, analyzing, and reporting data from the multiple contractors, and then sharing that information with stakeholders. Additionally, the Commission is responsible for providing technical assistance for programs during this process.

Several methods, using both qualitative and quantitative data sources, are employed to evaluate programs and the Commission’s progress towards results. The analysis of data, site visits and interviews are examples of techniques used for evaluation. The following are sources of data that the programs and Commission utilize throughout the evaluation process:



- ✦ Outcome-based scorecards (SCOARRS)
- ✦ Budgets
  - ✦ Invoices
  - ✦ Prop 10 Evaluation Data System (PEDS)
  - ✦ Contracts
  - ✦ Scopes of work
  - ✦ Site visit reports and discussions
  - ✦ Access database of correspondence
  - ✦ Annual reports

#### **Evaluation Deliverables**

The evaluation framework allows the Commission to share important information with stakeholders, both local and statewide, illustrating accountability, effectiveness and impacts on children 0-5, their families, and their communities. The Commission publishes a Local Annual Report and an Annual Program Evaluation, holding public hearings for both. This information is used to assist in decision-making and continuous improvement, directing the Commission and programs to repeat and enhance effective strategies, as well as to serve as a catalyst for improvement where appropriate. Ultimately, evaluation assists the Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission in knowing it is making the best investments possible to promote the development and well-being of children 0 – 5.



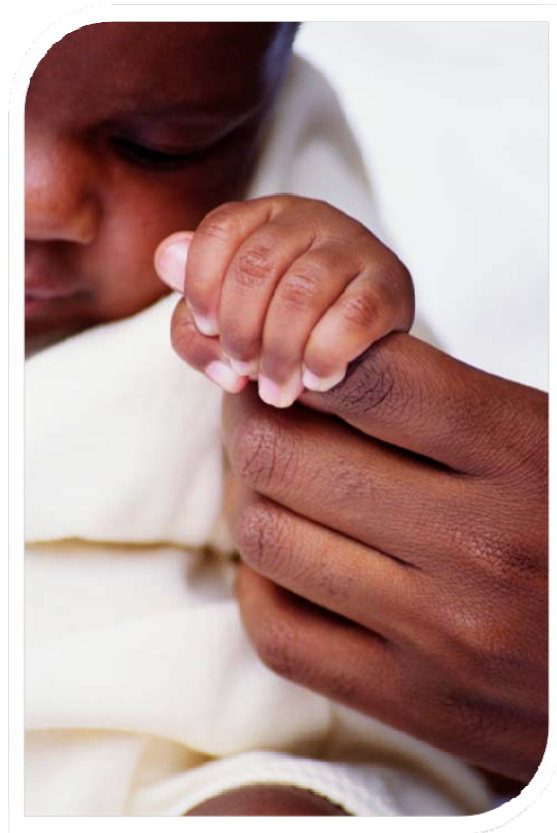
## *A Final Comment*

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The Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission has a solid track record of promoting the health and development of the county's population aged 0 through 5. The recent downturn in the economy has caused tobacco tax revenues to decrease at the very same time demands for children's services have increased. Unfortunately, the passage of AB 99 and the uncertainty associated with its legality will require the Commission to reduce its support of vital children's services at the start of the 2012-2013 fiscal year. The Commission has spent years preparing itself and its contractors for such an eventuality. AB 99 simply moved this eventuality to the 2012-2013 fiscal year rather than a fiscal year in the future. Regardless of any change in its resources, the Commission will continue to promote the development and well-being of the county's youngest residents and will continue to use the resources available to it to maintain and improve the positive impacts made by funded programs in recent years.

This strategic plan refines the Commission's priorities so limited resources are expended in areas where the greatest benefit for children and their families can be generated. Should AB 99 be found to be unconstitutional and should the \$8,300,000 that has been set aside become available for the Stanislaus Commission's use,

the Commission will have to decide whether to reinstate terminated programs or seek new proposals or continue operating high priority programs for a longer period of time.



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