THE IMPACT OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION VERSUS FAMILY MAINTANENCE
ON THE TRANSMISSION OF INTERGENERATIONAL CHILD MALTREATMENT

A Project

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Division of Social Work
Abstract

of

THE IMPACT OF FAMILY REUNIFICATION VERSUS FAMILY MAINTENANCE ON THE TRANSMISSION OF INTERGENERATIONAL CHILD MALTREATMENT

by

Cristina Barajas

Julie Wuest

Throughout modern Child Welfare history, there has been debate over what programs, if any, reduce the transmission of intergenerational child abuse and neglect. This case study, conducted in Calaveras County, compares the outcomes of children who were provided Family Maintenance Services and those who were provided Family Reunification Services. It looks at the children when they first entered the Child Welfare system and again as adults to find out if their children have been involved with the Child Welfare system, as well. Some who work in Child Welfare believe outcomes are better for children who remain with their parents, rather than those who are removed from their care. Information for this study was gathered from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) in Calaveras County.

Kisun Nam, Ph.D., Committee Chair

Kisun Nam, Ph.D.

Date

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my parents, Esperanza and Rafael Barajas, for their unconditional support throughout my educational years. They have been an example of the greatness one can achieve through hard work and dedication. Thank you for always sacrificing yourselves to give my siblings and me the best future possible. I hope to make you proud.

To Josh Shemenski, thank you for being my back bone when I was feeling overwhelmed with all the responsibilities that came with the MSW program and life. I would not have achieved this goal without your support.

Special thanks to all the people that contributed to this project through words of encouragement, prayers, suggestions and proof reading. To my siblings, family, and friends, for your understanding when I had to dig my head into schoolwork and could not make it to see you. Know that you are always on my mind and heart.

Julie Wuest…my thesis partner. I am grateful for the opportunity to get to know you and call you a friend. Thank you for all the laughs and reminders that life does not need to be so serious. We did it!

Finally, I would like to dedicate this project to my nephew, Adrian Barajas. May this serve as an example that you can achieve your goals and dreams. Never doubt yourself and always believe that you can conquer the world.

Cristina Barajas
First and foremost, I would like to thank my mom and dad for their unwavering patience and support during each of my endeavors and the ups and downs that have come with. I could not have made it this far without them.

I would also like to thank all of the yeasayers in my life – the individuals who kept me thinking positively when it would have been easy to do otherwise.

My Nana was the inspiration for pursuing this line of work. She was the most genuinely caring and giving person I have ever met. If I can do half the good she did, then I feel as though I would have achieved more than most.

To my thesis partner, Cristina, we didn't get a thesis divorce! I am thankful for your open and honest communication and your patience with my lack of communication skills. You were a great person to spend extra time with because you're an adult!

Julie Wuest

This project would not have been possible without the support of the Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency-Department of Children’s Services staff. We appreciate your willingness to provide us with the tools necessary to complete this project.

Together we would like to thank our thesis advisor, Dr. Kisun Nam. We are grateful for your words of wisdom and continuous support throughout the writing process.
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Child Welfare agencies are responsible for the investigation of child maltreatment allegations. These agencies receive reports that allege child maltreatment on a regular basis. In 2011, California had 464,366 children who were subjects of an investigation report that alleged child maltreatment (Children’s Bureau, 2013, p. 75). Of these children, 86,412 were considered victims of child maltreatment (Children’s Bureau, 2013, p. 75). The social worker of the Child Welfare agency is responsible for the investigation of imminent danger and determines if there is child maltreatment based on this investigation. If the investigation is determined to be substantiated, and “credible evidence exists that child abuse or neglect has occurred,” a case is opened (DePanfillis, D. & Salus, M. K.). Oftentimes this leads to a child being removed from their parents and placed into protective custody. The court determines if Family Reunification services will be offered to the family and so the process of reunification begins. Family Maintenance services are offered when there is an absence of imminent risk of harm to the child(ren) and services provided to the family would substantially benefit the family.

In 2011, there were 400,540 children in foster care in the United States; 56,249 of these children were in foster care in California (Children’s Bureau, 2013, p. 75). The entrance of children into the welfare system has an array of financial costs for the county and state, as well as emotional costs for the children and families that enter the system. It is imperative to focus on offering the best services in order to meet client’s needs and
decrease the probability of clients re-entering the Child Welfare system.

There are different services that are offered to families that enter the Child Welfare system. These services include Family Reunification, Family Maintenance, Adoptions, Guardianship, and Kinship Care. The type of services offered to each family is based on the specifics of each case that is opened. Furthermore, the type of service could be based on funding available for the specific Child Welfare agency.

It is very common for a Child Welfare social worker to come across a case that involves extensive family history in the Child Welfare system. During the researchers’ respective internship experiences at Calaveras Child Protective Services and Sacramento Child Protective Services, they have found that it is common to encounter members of the same family from different generations entering the Child Welfare system. Researcher Wuest found a common occurrence of parents of children in the Children’s Receiving Home in Sacramento that stated they had been a client in that facility as a child. Parents made comments such as, “this place has changed a lot since I was last here”. When these parents were asked what they meant, they stated that they too had been removed from their parents when they were children. A similar situation occurred for Researcher Barajas during the first year of her internship at Calaveras County Child Protective Services. Researcher Barajas found that it was common for a new parent entering the Child Welfare system to have been removed from their parents when they were children. When speaking to long-term Child Welfare workers in Calaveras County, they often shared information of how they personally removed the client from their parents when the client was a child.
Statement of the Research Problem

Time and resources are spent in strengthening families and reducing risk of harm to children within the Child Welfare system. There is minimal information on the effects specific services offered within the Child Welfare system have on intergenerational child abuse and the likelihood of a child becoming a perpetrator of abuse as an adult.

Study purpose. This study aims to provide information about intergenerational outcomes based on two Child Welfare services – Family Reunification (FR) and Family Maintenance (FM). Intergenerational outcomes will be measured by looking at initial cases of child abuse or neglect that were assigned either FR or FM services. The children from those cases will then be researched in the CWS/CMS system to find out whether the children from the initial cases, who are now adults, have had involvement with the Child Welfare system as child abuse or neglect perpetrators. This study will focus on Child Welfare involvement across two generations and compare outcomes for children who were assigned FR services to those who received FM services.

Theoretical framework. For this study, the researchers focused on social learning theory. Social learning theory was used based on the premise that some of the families examined in the study received in-home services. Social learning theory maintains that individuals learn from their social environment (University of South Alabama). For young children, this often takes place in their home and the teachers are their caregivers. In Albert Bandura's Bobo doll experiment, both an aggressive and non-aggressive adult modeled behaviors with a Bobo doll while a child watched. When it was the child's turn to interact with the Bobo doll, those who observed the aggressive adult modeled
aggressive behaviors (Bandura, 1961). It follows that a child growing up in a home with physical or emotional abuse will learn these modeled behaviors and eventually act them out. This will unfold in one of two ways: the caregivers engaging in abusive behaviors will receive services and will be able to model positive, non-abusive behaviors for their child(ren) or the aggressive behavior will be the only behavior modeled for the children while with their caregivers. The purpose of using social learning theory as a theoretical framework is that it is believed by the researchers that if behaviors of the parents are improved by FM services and modeled for the children, the children will learn these positive behaviors and later use them with their own children. Whereas with FR, the children are placed out of the home and the behaviors the children are exposed to by the substitute caregivers and other foster children in the home cannot be accounted for or easily controlled.

**Definition of terms**

**Child Protective Services (CPS):** The government agency tasked with investigating allegations of child abuse and/or neglect and determining whether the child(ren) is at risk of harm. The agency also provides long-term case management and services to families.

**Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS):** The computer system in which CPS stores case information.

**In-home Services/Family Maintenance Services:** Services ranging from individual and family counseling to parenting classes. These services are provided for families in which it is assessed that the child(ren) can be maintained safely in the home while the family is receiving services.
Out-of-Home Services/Family Reunification Services: An arrangement whereby a person is safeguarded by law enforcement authorities in a location other than the person's home because his or her safety is seriously threatened, but the family works with CPS to reunify with the child(ren).

Service Component: Type of service provided by Child Welfare agency, such as Family Maintenance or Family Reunification.

Social work research justification. This study aligns with the primary mission of the social work profession to “enhance human well being” (National Association of Social Workers, 2008). The findings of this research study have the potential to benefit the social work profession by providing further information on factors that may increase the probability of a family entering the Child Welfare system. It will also offer additional understanding of the long-term effects of Family Maintenance services versus the effects of placing a child in protective custody. This information may help Child Welfare social workers determine the most appropriate services to offer families in order to decrease the probability of a family re-entering the Child Welfare system.

Study limitations. This study is not to question the programs and policies outlined by the California Welfare and Institutions Code. Furthermore, this study will not propose a change to the current services that exist within the Child Welfare system. This study will focus on individuals involved in the Child Welfare system in Calaveras County in California. It will compare outcomes for the children who received FR services and those who received FM services.

Statement of collaboration. The efforts put forth in the completion of this
research study were a collaborative effort of Master of Social Work students Cristina Barajas and Julie Wuest. The writing of this research study was overseen by Thesis Advisor, Dr. Kisun Nam.
Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review is organized in the following eight sections. The first section will provide information about the history and evolution of Child Welfare. The second, third, and fourth sections will explore Family Reunification (FR), which involves temporarily removing children from their home, Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools which are used to help social workers evaluate the level of risk to a child, and Family Preservation (FP) which involves providing services to the family while the children are living in the home. The fifth section will discuss services available to clients living in rural areas. The sixth section will explore the psychological effects removal has on children – both short-term and long-term. The seventh section discusses the prevalence of intergenerational maltreatment and the final section addresses future research of the topic.

History of Child Welfare

In 1874, a girl named Mary Ellen Wilson was subjected to routine neglect and beatings at the hands of her guardians (Myers, p. 451). A friendly visitor in Hell's Kitchen, Mary Ellen's tenement, named Etta Wheeler learned of the abuse and neglect the young girl endured and was determined to help. Wheeler approached multiple Child Welfare institutions for assistance, but her pleas went unanswered. It was not until she contacted Henry Bergh, the president of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), that Wheeler began to move closer toward helping Mary Ellen (McGowan, p. 17). Bergh had his attorney, Elbridge Gerry, take the case to court.
where the caretakers were prosecuted for what they made Mary Ellen endure. Following the decision, *The New York Times* wrote “the apprehension and subsequent conviction of the persecutors of little Mary Ellen … suggested to Mr. Elbridge T. Gerry, the counsel engaged in the prosecution of the case, the necessity for the existence of an organized society for the prevention of similar acts of atrocity” (McGowan, p. 17).

On the heels of the attention the Mary Ellen case received, Bergh and Gerry created a non-profit dedicated to child protection in 1875. This non-profit was called the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NYSPCC) and was the first of its kind in the world (“The Catalyst”, n.d.). By 1922, over 300 other non-profit agencies devoted to the protection of children had spread throughout the country (Myers, p.452). However, “the Great Depression of the 1930s hastened the demise of nongovernmental SPCCs” and the era of government-run Child Welfare agencies began (Myers, p. 453).

In the meantime, the first federally funded agency targeted toward improving the lives of children and their families, the Children's Bureau, was created in 1912. The scope of the Bureau's focus ranged from infant and maternal death to abused and neglected children. The purpose of the agency “was to investigate and report 'upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of children and child life among all classes of our people’”. The Children's Bureau was initially run by 16 people with a first-year operating budget of $25,640 (The Children's Bureau, n.d.).

The next step in creating the Child Welfare system that exists today came with the passage of President Roosevelt's New Deal in 1935. The part of the New Deal that
impacted Child Welfare was the Social Security Act, specifically Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), Title IV, and Title V. The ADC “provided millions of dollars to support poor families” (Myers, p. 453). Title V, Part 3, Child Welfare Services, discussed not only helping children who lived with their families, but also extended to substitute care providers. Title V states its purpose is to enable “the United States, through the Children's Bureau, to cooperate with State public welfare agencies in establishing, extending, and strengthening, especially in predominantly rural areas, public welfare services … for the protection and care of homeless, dependent, and neglected children, and children in danger of becoming delinquent” (The Children's Bureau, n.d.).

As far as policy was concerned, “the period from the late 1930s to the late 1950s was a time of relative quiet” (McGowan, p. 27). These decades were a time in which policy did not change, but workers began to settle in to their new found roles in the Child Welfare system. During this time, “the total number and rate of children placed in foster homes and institutional care declined substantially … , whereas the proportion of children receiving services in their own homes, the total public expenditures for Child Welfare, and the total number of professionals in public Child Welfare increased significantly” (p. 27).

It was not until 1962 that pivotal events took place and the growth of the Child Welfare system recommenced. Prior to 1962, local news outlets had covered stories of child abuse and neglect, oftentimes resulting in a child fatality, but the coverage was not widespread. With the publication of *The Battered Child Syndrome*, the nation had stories of abuse published by “national news outlets like Newsweek, Saturday Evening Post, 
Parents Magazine, Time, Good Housekeeping, and Life” (Myers, p. 455). The publication of the article and subsequent stories written nationwide citing the article brought new life to policy regarding Child Welfare. One such policy change was the amendment to the Social Security Act, which extended aid to families in need. There were also two meetings held by the Children's Bureau in 1962 to discuss how they “could more effectively help states respond to child abuse” (p. 456). As a result of these meetings, “legislation requiring doctors to report suspicions of abuse to police or Child Welfare” (p. 456) was written and later passed. This legislation marked the beginning of mandated reporting and, ultimately, higher rates of reporting child abuse and neglect.

Throughout the 1960s, 70s, and 80s, there were several amendments made to Child Welfare legislation that was already in place. In 1993, the Family Preservation and Support Services Program was passed by Congress. This earmarked federal money for supportive services to families and increased the amount available for Family Preservation services, also known as Family Maintenance services. The act was in response to growing numbers of children in the foster care system, as well as children going to adoptions (McGowan, p.38). Since the 1993 act, the amount of funds made available for Family Preservation services has been in a state of flux, due to budgetary issues.

Family Reunification

Family Reunification is usually the result of Protective Custody, or the detention of a person for their own protection, is dictated by the Welfare and Institutions Codes (WIC) 300 (a)-(j). Once a child is placed into protective custody at the discretion of a
CPS investigator and a judge who has signed a warrant granting removal of a child from his home, the case usually offered FR services. In FR, the family has the opportunity to reunify by participating in programs, showing positive growth and change, and demonstrating an ability to be protective of the child. The WIC pertaining to child abuse and neglect were codified in 1909 and have been amended numerous times since (Legislative Intent Service, 2011). All of the cases examined by the researchers fell into the following three categories of the 300 codes: (a) physical abuse, (b) failure to protect, and (c) emotional abuse. Codes 300 (d)-(i) include the offenses of sexual abuse, severe physical abuse of a child under the age of five, the parent has caused the death of another child through abuse or neglect, abandonment, parental rights have been terminated, and child cruelty, none of which would warrant FM services. None of the cases that were studied contained (j) allegations, which are involvement due to the abuse or neglect of a sibling.

Although some investigations of child abuse or neglect conducted by CPS may substantiate any of the aforementioned descriptions, it may not be enough evidence to place the victim child into protective custody and open FR services for the family. An acting supervisor for CPS Emergency Response (ER) said the following with regards to the intricacies of legally detaining a child under the WIC:

We base everything on the allegations, the investigation, the family history – CPS history and criminal history, so you have to look at everything as a whole. We also look at what services have been provided to the family. Let's say this is a first time call on this family and it's DV, parents are hitting each other in front of some little children. The children are witnessing it. Law enforcement may go there and law enforcement may place the children in protective custody. Let's say they arrest the parents and place the children in protective custody. What we would do is
assess are the kids at risk when they go home with their parents when they get out of jail. You have to base everything on risk and whether there's a protective parent.

As explained in the above statement, some situations are not clearly FR or FM. For example, with an (a) allegation, if the offending parent left a mark on the victim child such as a welt or a bruise, a worker may present the case in a way in which the child could be legally removed from the home. The case could also be presented in a way that demonstrates the child be maintained safely in the home by identifying a protective parent and creating a Safety Plan in order to prevent future physical abuse. Codes 300 (b) and (c) are similar in that there are ways the allegations can be substantiated but the child can either stay in the home or be placed in protective custody.

*Family Maintenance*

The Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980 indicated that Child Welfare services would focus on “protecting and promoting the welfare of all children…; preventing …or assisting in the solution of problems which may result in the neglect, abuse, exploitation, or delinquency of children”; preventing the removal of children from their parents by offering appropriate services; returning children to their home once appropriate; identifying appropriate adoptive homes for children not returning to their biological parents; and ensuring children are adequately cared for while they are away from their biological parents (Samantrai, 2003, p. 3).

There have been many legislative changes to the programs and services offered within the Child Welfare system throughout the years. The services offered to preserve children in their home with their parents have varied. In the 1980’s, the focus on the
removal of children led to a high number of children in custody and major problems within the Child Welfare system (Samantrai, 2003, p. 133). Due to these issues, the federal government added a section to The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, known as the Family Preservation and Support Services provision in 1993 (p. 133). In 1997 there was a re-authorization of these services by the federal government which allowed for all states to offer these types of services. To this date, Child Welfare agencies offer Family Preservation services to families in need.

Family Preservation services, also known as Family Maintenance, is a component of the Child Welfare system. The focus of this service component is on keeping children safe in the home while assisting families dealing with crisis (Child Welfare Information Gateway, n.d.). Services offered to families may include counseling, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention and parenting education (Reed & Karpilow, 2002, p. 11). In Calaveras county the goals of Family Preservation services are to “assist families in coping with problems that interfere with successful parenting,” assist with finding community resources and supports and “to help the family learn skills necessary to provide a safe and caring environment for the child” (Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency, n.d.). Participation in these services could be voluntary or mandated by the court. Voluntary participation is offered to families who have children that “are determined to be in danger of out-of home placement” (Calaveras Works and Human Services Agency, n.d.) . These services are not voluntary for families who have recently reunified with their children and families “who are identified by the primary social worker, with a supervisor’s approval, that they could benefit from Family
There is some research that indicates it is often difficult to get parents to engage in Family Preservation services voluntarily as they want to avoid the stigma associated with working with Child Welfare staff (Gockel, Russell, & Harris, 2008, p. 92). This could be the reason data indicates there are more families involved in Family Reunification versus Family Maintenance services in the Child Welfare system. In January of 1998 the data indicated that in California, 29.9% of cases were receiving family reunification services compared to 8.9% of cases receiving Family Maintenance services (Needell, et. al., 2014). These numbers are not much different from more recent data. Data from January of 2014 indicates that 35.7% of cases were in Family Reunification and 12.5% were in Family Maintenance (Needell, et al., 2014). California’s data is similar to Calaveras county’s data that shows 30.8% of cases were receiving Family Reunification services in January of 1998 and 10.6% of cases were receiving Family Maintenance services (Needell, et al., 2014). In January of 2014, 50.0% of cases were in Family Reunification and 4.4% were in Family Maintenance (Needell, et al., 2014). Another factor that may lead to these numbers is the availability of financial and personnel resources to provide the necessary services for families needing Family Maintenance services. It is important for the Child Welfare system to work towards reducing the stigma and increasing the availability of resources as families in crisis could greatly benefit from preventative services.

*Structured Decision Making*

Social workers use various tools when investigating allegations of child
maltreatment and when managing cases in the Child Welfare system. One of the tools utilized is a computerized system called Structured Decision Making (SDM). The California Department of Social Services started the Structured Decision Making (SDM) Project in 1998 in order to assist Child Welfare workers with assessing and determining actions to take when investigating reports alleging abuse and/or neglect of children in California (Department of Social Services, n.d.). SDM is a computerized assessment tool that is currently used in 54 of the 58 counties in California and in some states throughout the United States (Department of Social Services, n.d.). The objectives of the SDM system are to assist with “consistency and validity” of decisions being made by social workers, reduce child maltreatment, focus on interventions for families that are at risk, and to increase the success of the Child Welfare system (Dankert & Johnson, 2013, p. 1).

Within the various tools of SDM, there are a series of questions that the social worker must answer based on the case being assessed. Once all the questions are answered, they are scored and results are provided for each assessment tool completed. Questions range from current circumstances of families to prior history of families. A question in the SDM’s risk assessment asks about parent’s history of abuse or neglect as a child. While this is not seen as a “cause” for parents being perpetrators as adults, it is seen as a factor that could increase the risk of child maltreatment.

SDM offers various tools within the system to assist Child Welfare workers in assessing various aspects of families. The hotline tool assists in determining if a response should be made and within what time frame for a referral received. The safety assessment helps assess if a child will be safe if he/she remains in the home (Department of Social
Services, n.d.). The risk assessment determines if there is enough risk for a case to be opened. The family strengths and needs assessment helps outline the needs, strengths and services needed by the family. The reunification assessment assists with determining if returning children to the home is appropriate and the in-home family risk assessment helps with determining if a case in Family Maintenance will be closed or whether or not the children will remain in the home (Department of Social Services, n.d.).

To Remove or Not to Remove

Social workers in Calaveras County did not have a written out procedure of how to determine if they would remove a child or leave the child in the home when investigating referrals. In an interview with the current program manager of Calaveras Health and Human Services - Children’s Services Mikey Habbestad, she indicated she worked as a social worker in the emergency response department in 1997 investigating referrals. She indicated that SDM was not utilized in the county until approximately five years ago and they did not have an assessment tool when investigating allegations of child maltreatment. They received training on the emergency response protocol curriculum from CSU, Fresno and utilized those skills learned when assessing allegations of abuse (M. Habbestad, personal communication, April 16, 2014).

There were many factors that were taken into account when investigation allegations of child maltreatment (M. Habbestad, personal communication, April 16, 2014). Some of these factors included the age of the child(ren) and the history of Child Welfare involvement (M. Habbestad, personal communication, April 16, 2014). Mrs. Habbestad indicated that it was difficult to determine prior Child Welfare involvement of
families that occurred outside of Calaveras County due to the CWS/CMS system not being fully utilized across most counties until 1998. Prior to the CWS/CMS system, social workers utilized a card catalog system to document referrals received by the county.

When looking at the number of cases in Family Maintenance versus family reunification, one can see that Family Reunification cases are higher than Family Maintenance cases. Mrs. Habbestad indicated that she felt this was due to social workers being more diligent and erring in the side of caution. She indicated this is specifically the case when imminent risk is present. Mrs. Habbestad stated that in the past when they investigated concerns of a dirty home or drug use, social workers would provide the family with specific tasks in order to remedy the environment or situation while leaving the children in the home. The social worker would then return and check the home or drug test the client and would make a decision based on actions parents would take. Anecdotally, Mrs. Habbestad feels they would place children in the protective custody for neglect less in the past than the county does now because methamphetamine use has become a bigger problem in present time.

Services in Rural Areas

When analyzing cases and looking at outcomes of service components within Child Welfare agencies, it is important to take into account the various characteristics of the county of residence of subjects being analyzed. An important characteristic to take into consideration for this research study is that Calaveras County is a rural county with a population of 45,052 (U.S. Census, Quick Facts, 2011). Access to services in the county
are often limited due to the overwhelming demand from Child Welfare clients and community members and the minimal number of service providers.

It is important for families in crisis to receive appropriate services in order for them to achieve positive outcomes. Research shows that early prevention programs obtained by families at risk for child maltreatment produce a “significant decrease in the manifestation of abusive and neglectful acts” (Geeraert, L, Noortgate, W. V., Grietens, H., & Onghena, P., 2004, p. 286). Unfortunately access to appropriate services is often limited for persons located in rural areas. Friedman (2003) noted that “rural communities often lack the infrastructure needed to attract businesses, and the expenses associated with development can be high” (p. 1). An example of this is seen in Calaveras County. Oftentimes families need specific services, such as inpatient drug rehabilitation services, and they are not always available within the immediate geographical location. Families and social workers within the Child Welfare system struggle to find the most appropriate services that will assist in decreasing the family’s crisis.

**Impact of Removal on a Child**

The process of the investigation by CPS and subsequent removal from the home have been shown to be traumatic for the children and families involved. There are multiple factors that can contribute to trauma to the child during the investigation, one of which is the element of surprise. In some cases, the process is sudden and unexpected, which causes distress in the parents. This distress trickles down to the child(ren). It is also a very intrusive process involving strangers coming into the home to interrogate parents and criminalize their behaviors. Oftentimes, in the case of removal, the child(ren) does
not want to go and feels as though he is being kidnapped because he is bonded with the parents. Another factor that can cause the removal to be traumatic is the unknown (Reducing the Trauma of Investigation, Removal, and Initial Out-of-Home Placement in Child Abuse Cases, n.d.). The child(ren) has likely adapted to the maltreatment in the home and developed survival strategies (Samantrai, 2003, p. 72). Once removed and placed in another home, the child(ren) can no longer predict what will happen and may be subjected to maltreatment for which they are not prepared. In addition, there is an overwhelming sense of loss and change when a child is removed. Upon placement in a new home, the child may lose his friends, possessions, routines, and sometimes school, in addition to his parents (Reducing the Trauma of Investigation, Removal, and Initial Out of-Home Placement in Child Abuse Cases, n.d.).

According to the Mayo Clinic, in some cases of abandonment or early separation from a primary caregiver, a child will develop Reactive Attachment Disorder because a healthy bond was not established with a primary caregiver. “Reactive Attachment Disorder is a lifelong condition” that has a significant impact of interpersonal relationships (Reactive Attachment Disorder, n.d.). Other psychological effects of abandonment can include a deep-seated fear of loss, impaired cognitive and emotional functioning, feelings of shame and insecurity, and problems with intimacy (Ryan, 2012). Due to the severity of psychological issues that can be a result of abandonment or separation from a primary caregiver, it is imperative to ensure families remain together, if possible. The UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration states, “The younger the child is when s/he is removed from the family, the worse the situation. If the child is
preverbal, the effect can be multiplied because s/he does not yet know how to express his/her feeling” (Removal from the Home: Resulting Trauma, n.d.).

For example, Lyman Wostrel’s mother abandoned him at a young age and he still struggles with the painful memories of that event. He said, “As much as a person says that I do love you, or whatever they try to justify that action, it is not the case. A child is smart enough to figure it out (Knapp, 2008).” That was just one example of the lifelong trauma that results from the separation of a child from a caregiver.

**Prevalence of Intergenerational Maltreatment**

Child maltreatment does not discriminate based on race, religion, socio-economic status or any other demographic identifier that is commonly used to lump information together. After decades of research, there has not been a single behavior or circumstance that has proven to be predictive of child maltreatment. However, several risk factors have been identified. These risk factors are grouped in four domains, which include parent or caregiver factors, family factors, child factors, and environmental factors. One of the factors leading to potential child abuse on the part of a parent or caregiver is a history of childhood abuse. While the numbers vary, “one review of the relevant research suggested that about one-third of all individuals who were maltreated will subject their children to maltreatment” (Goldman, 2003). That is one of the higher percentages in studies conducted about intergenerational maltreatment and it narrowly focused on children who had been exposed to domestic violence. There were several other studies that explored the transmission of intergenerational maltreatment associated with other variables, such as sexual abuse and corporal punishment.
In the study of corporal punishment, it was found that “one of the most commonly reported characteristics of physically punitive parents is that of history of maltreatment” (Muller, 1995, p. 1323). It is stated repeatedly in literature that there is a link between being abused as a child and becoming an abusive parent. According to McWey (2013), “both fathers and mothers who had childhood histories of maltreatment were at an increased risk of parent to child violence in adulthood” (p. 133). However, it was reported “that a maternal history of abuse accounted for nearly 30% of the variance in predicting child maltreatment, and findings from a quantitative study of 213 mothers indicated that no one type of past maltreatment (i.e., physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse) predicted intergenerational transmission better than another” (McWey, 2013, p. 134).

Although being abused is not predictive of becoming an abuser, it is a risk factor. Since 1999, the California Department of Social Services has contracted with the Children’s Research Center (CRC) to conduct studies using Child Welfare Services (CWS) data in order to create a tool that can be used to assess the risk of child abuse or neglect. One of the variables the CRC determined to be a factor in evaluating risk to a child is whether or not the primary caregiver has a history of abuse or neglect as a child (Johnson, 2013, p. I).

**Future Research**

Research could be found in relation to Family Reunification services and the recidivism rate for families. Wulczyn (2004) indicated that approximately 30% of families who reunified reentered the Child Welfare system within 10 years (p. 95). He
further indicated that “infants and adolescents are less likely to be reunified than children in other age groups” (Wulczyn, 2004, p. 95). While research on recidivism rate is important, it is equally important to study intergenerational involvement with the Child Welfare system.

Many Child Welfare agencies have encountered families that have a history of intergenerational involvement with the Child Welfare system. The cause for this intergenerational involvement is not always clear. Furthermore, there is minimal data and research on the effects Family Reunification and Family Preservation services have on intergenerational involvement with Child Welfare. Future research could focus on the effects services received by families have on intergenerational involvement with the Child Welfare system.
Chapter 3

METHODS

Study Objectives

This study utilized qualitative non-randomized convenience sampling. Secondary data was obtained from existing case files originating in Calaveras County based on qualifying criteria that was outlined by the researchers.

Study Design

This study is a qualitative study because the researchers used secondary data obtained from existing case files. This is a longitudinal study as the researchers are identifying clients of Calaveras Health and Human Services Agency from 1998 to 2001 who participated in Family Maintenance or Family Reunification services as children within the Child Protective Services department of the agency. The researchers are researching whether or not these children have had Child Protective Services involvement from any Child Welfare agency in California as adults.

Sampling and Data Collection Procedures

The researchers utilized secondary data obtained from the Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) at Calaveras Health and Human Services Agency. CWS/CMS is a computer database utilized by all 58 counties in California that automates the documenting of case history, “case management, services planning, and information gathering functions of Child Welfare services” (Department of Social Services, n.d.). The researchers obtained a list of all cases that involved emotional abuse and general neglect allegations from 1998 until 2001 and searched for these cases
in the CWS/CMS database to determine the specific reasons for Child Protective Services involvement. Those cases that indicated a possibility of the case being offered either Family Reunification or Family Maintenance were included in this study. The emotional abuse cases that indicated the child(ren) would be immediately placed in protective custody (i.e., cases involving sexual abuse) resulted in automatic disqualification from this study. Once the qualifying cases were identified, the researchers focused on the child(ren) involved in these cases. The researchers then determined if the child(ren) in the identified cases were involved in the Child Welfare system at any point as perpetrators of child abuse or maltreatment as adults by searching the CWS/CMS database.

**Measurement and Instruments**

This research utilized CWS/CMS to gather relevant study information on subjects. No questionnaires were utilized for the purpose of this study.

The independent variable in this study is the initial conditions of the cases we are researching (i.e., what service component were offered, Family Maintenance or Family Reunification services). The dependent variable is whether or not the children of the cases between 1998 and 2001 became perpetrators of abuse as adults (i.e., if intergenerational abuse exists). The researchers are measuring the dependent variable by searching the name of the children in the initial cases within the CWS/CMS database.

**Data Analysis**

After a review of 50 cases, the researchers identified nine cases that received Family Maintenance services and 14 cases that received Family Reunification services between 1998 and 2001.
Protection of Human Subjects

The researchers completed the human subjects protocol application and submitted it to the Sacramento State Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB reviewed the application and determined the application was approved as exempt. The researchers obtained permission from the director of the Calaveras Health and Human Services Agency to review case files that were pertinent to our study.

The researchers assigned random identifying numbers and ensured any identifying information was omitted throughout the data collection and the final thesis project. Furthermore this information did not leave the Calaveras Health and Human Services Agency office. All data collection took place in a secured Calaveras Health and Human Services Agency office and on a non-networked personal computer. The researchers were the only persons, outside of the Calaveras CPS personnel, that had access to the physical data that was collected.
Chapter 4

STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Within the Child Welfare system, it is common to encounter a case with an extensive history of intergenerational abuse. This research study examines the adult outcomes of subjects who received Child Welfare services during their minor years. It compares the likelihood of intergenerational involvement in the Child Welfare system between subjects who were taken into protective custody and received Family Reunification as minors and subjects who remained in the home and received Family Maintenance services. The researchers reviewed cases originating in Calaveras County utilizing the CWS/CMS database. Twenty-three different subjects were analyzed, each being a child involved in a CPS case between the years of 1997 and 2000. The qualitative analysis focuses on youth demographics, services provided to families, and the incidence of subjects being named as perpetrators in subsequent CPS cases. This section also consists of an in depth analysis of the subjects that demonstrated Child Welfare involvement as adults.

Overall Findings

Overall, 23 subjects were qualitatively analyzed and the following section outlines the results of this analysis. The results are presented as in the following order: Demographics of Subjects, Services Received by Subjects and their Parents, and Subjects with CPS Involvement as Adults.

Demographics of Subjects

The majority of the subjects in the study were over six years of age when they entered services within the Child Welfare system (83%, n=19). Four subjects (17%) were
five and under; 10 subjects (43%) were between six and 12 years old; and nine subjects (39%) were 13 to 17 years old.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 years old and under</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 12 years old</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 to 17 years old</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The current age of the subjects ranges from 17 to 32 years of age. Five of the subjects (21.7%) are between 17 and 21 years old; seven (30.4%) are between 22 and 26 years old; and 11 (47.8%) are between 27 and 32 years old.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Age of Subjects</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17-21 years old</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-26 years old</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-32 years old</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of female and male subjects was almost equal, 11 subjects were female (47.8%) and 12 subjects were male (52.5%).
Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of Subjects</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 23 subjects, 17 (73.9%) had siblings that were also involved in the Child Welfare system as children and six (26.1%) were the only child in the family.

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Subjects with Siblings versus without Siblings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Siblings</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Services Received by Subjects and their Parents

For the purpose of this study, the researchers analyzed those that received one of two service components at the start of the family’s case with CPS: Family Reunification (the children were placed in protective custody) or Family Maintenance (the children remained in the home). Of the 23 subjects, 14 (60.9%) received Family Reunification services and nine (39.1%) received Family Maintenance services.
Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Component Received by the Family</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Reunification</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Maintenance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 and Table 7 contain a breakdown of services received by the subjects’ parents. They are separated by those that received Family Reunification and Family Maintenance. If the totals are comprised together, we could see that not all subjects’ parents participated in services and those that participated did not receive all of the four types of services outlined (11 (48%) of the 23 parents did not participate in services).

Of the 14 subjects that received Family Reunification services, six (42.9%) parents participated in one or more type of service and the remaining eight (57.1%) did not participate in recommended services. Of those that participated, four (28.6%) parents received parenting; three (21.4%) parents received substance abuse treatment; two (14.3%) received domestic violence counseling; and six (42.9%) received counseling/mental health services. Furthermore, two of the parents received all four types of services; three parents received two service types and one received one type of service.
Table 6

Services Received by Parents of Subjects in Family Reunification
N=14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Treatment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Counseling</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/Mental Health Services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Participate in Services</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>57.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the nine families that received Family Maintenance, six parents (66.7%) participated in one or more type of service and three (33.3%) did not participate in services. Five parents participated in two types of services and one participated in one service. Three (33.3%) parents participated in parenting services; five (55.6%) participated in substance abuse treatment; one (11.1%) participated in domestic violence counseling; and two (22.2%) participated in counseling/mental health services.

Table 7

Services Received by Parents of Subjects in Family Maintenance
N=9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Treatment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Counseling</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/Mental Health Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Participate in Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The types of services provided to the subjects as minors in the study varied depending on the identified need in each case. Of the 14 subjects whose family received Family Reunification services, 11 (78.6%) participated in one or more service and three (21.4%) did not participate in services. 10 (71.4%) participated in counseling/mental health services; six (42.9%) participated in an independent living program; and one (7.1%) participated in substance abuse services.

Table 8

Services Received by Subjects as Minors in Family Reunification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/Mental Health Services</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>71.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Program</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Participate in Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the nine subjects in Family Maintenance, three (33.3%) participated in one or more service and six (66.7%) did not participate in any services. Three (33.3) of these subjects participated in counseling/mental health services; one (11.1%) participated in an independent living program; and two (22.2%) participated in substance abuse services.
Table 9

*Services Received by Subjects as Minors in Family Maintenance*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/Mental Health Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Participate in Services</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjects with CPS Involvement as Adults

Of the 23 subjects, 14 (60.9%) received Family Reunification services and nine (39.1%) received Family Maintenance services as minors. Four of the 23 total subjects had CPS involvement as adult perpetrators and 19 did not have CPS involvement as adults.

Table 10

*CPS Involvement* as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Subjects with CPS Involvement as Adults</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Subjects with no CPS Involvement as Adults</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*involvement includes referrals to CPS and opened CPS cases*

The subjects whose family participated in Family Reunification services, three (21.4%) were involved with CPS as adult perpetrators and 11 (78.6%) did not have involvement with CPS as of March 16, 2014. Of the nine subjects whose family received Family Maintenance services, one (11.1%) had CPS involvement and eight (88.9%) were
not involved as adult perpetrators within the Child Welfare system as of March 16, 2014.

Table 11

*CPS Involvement* as Adults Based on Initial Service Component
N = 23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protective Custody</th>
<th>Family Maintenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*involvement includes referrals to CPS and opened CPS cases

When looking at the demographics of subjects with CPS involvement as adults, we can see the following: three (75.0%) were female and one (25.0%) was male. One subject was seven, another was eight, a third was 16, and the final one was 17 years-old when they first entered the Child Welfare system. The current ages of the subjects are 23, 28, 31 and 32 years-old respectively. Furthermore, three of the four subjects had siblings.
Table 12

*Characteristics of Subjects with CPS involvement as Adults*

N=4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age when initial CPS Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 1: 7 years-old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 2: 8 years-old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 3: 16 years-old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 4: 17 years-old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Age of Subjects</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 1: 23 years-old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 2: 28-years old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 3: 31-years old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 4: 32-years old</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the four subjects participated in one or more service as minors: three participated in counseling/mental health services, all (four) participated in an independent living program, and two participated in substance abuse services.
Table 13

*Services Received by Subjects as Minors with CPS Involvement as Adults*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service(s) Received</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counseling/Mental Health Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Program</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Participate in Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subject one’s parents received voluntary family maintenance due to allegations of
general neglect. Subject two was removed from the home due to physical abuse and
general neglect. Subject three was removed from the home due to emotional abuse and
caretaker absence. Subject four was removed from the home due to general neglect.

Table 14

*Type of Abuse of Subjects as Children*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Type of Abuse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject 1</td>
<td>General Neglect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 2</td>
<td>Physical Abuse and General Neglect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 3</td>
<td>Emotional Abuse and Caretaker Absence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject 4</td>
<td>General Neglect</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Specific Findings**

The researchers found all cases similar in that all of the families experienced a
low level of child abuse and/or neglect. All children in the first generation resided with
one or both parents at the time of their first contact with CPS. In each case, the parent or
parents were offered services; ranging from group counseling to individual parenting
demonstrations. While parents were offered these services, not all parents participated in services (only 52% of parents participated in one or more service offered).

There are some differences among the families that received Family Maintenance versus Family Reunification. When looking at participation in services, 78% of the subjects who received Family Reunification participated in one or more service and only 33% of subjects who received Family Maintenance participated in one or more service. For the parents of the subjects as minors, 42% who received Family Reunification participated in one or more service and 67% who received Family Maintenance participated in one or more service.

Although only four of the 23 subjects originally selected for the data set transmitted abuse or neglect to the next generation, it is worth noting that two of the parents who received Family Maintenance reported being the victim of abuse or neglect as a child. There was no documentation of the severity of abuse or neglect they experienced or whether any interventions took place during their childhood. In addition, all four of these subjects reached age of majority (i.e., 18 years of age) prior to their parent’s Child Welfare case closing. Of these four subjects, the majority were female (75%) and had one or more sibling (75%). Furthermore, all four subjects participated in an independent living program. The subjects whose family received Family Reunification participated in the following paired services: counseling, independent living program, and substance abuse; counseling and independent living program; and independent living program.
Interpretations of the Findings

The researchers were able to identify a higher number of subjects that received Family Reunification services versus those subjects that received Family Maintenance that met the criteria for inclusion in this study. As mentioned in the literature review, it is more likely that a family participate in Family Reunification versus Family Maintenance. This has been the case throughout the years. Furthermore, the researchers found that cases were likely to begin as voluntary Family Maintenance and then move to Family Reunification, when the children were later removed from the home.

The findings suggest the transmission of intergenerational Child Welfare involvement is more likely to occur for those who are placed into protective custody and offered Family Reunification, rather than provided in-home services.

It should be noted that the researchers had a difficult time identifying some information in cases analyzed due to CWS/CMS being a new system in 1996; which led to the likelihood of missing information. One could see an example of this in the section of “services received” by parents and subjects above. The parents and subjects who were indicated as not having received or participated in any type of service could be due to missing information in CWS/CMS.

Summary

Of the 14 subjects who received Family Reunification (placed into protective custody), 21% (n=3) experienced CPS involvement as adults. This is compared to 11% (n=1) of the individuals who received Family Maintenance (in-home services). It is also worth noting that the four subjects who were found to have CPS involvement as adults
remained in the Child Welfare system until they reached the age of majority (18 years-old).
Chapter 5

CONCLUSION, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Study

This study analyzed the outcomes Family Reunification versus Family Maintenance services have on intergenerational involvement with the Child Welfare system. The study consisted of a qualitative analysis of cases that originated in Calaveras County between 1997 and 2000 and had Child Welfare involvement within that timeframe. The researchers utilized CWS/CMS to gather study related data on each subject being analyzed. An analysis of the data indicated that children who were removed from their home and received Family Reunification services were more likely to have Child Welfare involvement as adults than children who remained in their home and received Family Maintenance services.

Implications for Micro Social Work

This research study shows that providing voluntary Family Maintenance services has the potential of decreasing the probability of intergenerational involvement in the Child Welfare system. Voluntary Family Maintenance needs to be re-implemented in counties throughout the state as these services were minimized or eliminated in many counties in California due to budgetary cutbacks. Furthermore, offering Family Maintenance services will reduce the monetary costs associated with placing a child in protective custody and out of home placement. The researchers of this study propose that funding that is allocated to place a child in foster care be redistributed and a greater monetary focus be placed on voluntary Family Maintenance within Child Welfare
One of the focuses of the Child Welfare system is strengthening families. This focus can be greatly achieved by providing families with adequate services and resources. Furthermore, removing children from the home results in a tremendous amount of emotional trauma which does not align with the focus of strengthening families. The researchers believe that if imminent risk of harm does not exist, the family should be provided Family Maintenance services and focus should be placed on stabilizing families across counties in California.

**Implications for Macro Social Work**

Offering voluntary Family Maintenance will keep children in the home which in turn will eliminate the trauma associated with being removed. In addition, children in foster care often experience numerous changes in foster care placements. Each change in placement is traumatizing for a child and after more than one placement change, the trauma compounds. One can see how compounded trauma affects the behavior of people, especially children. Children with trauma, especially those in foster care, will exhibit negative or inappropriate behaviors which over time can become difficult to manage. Not addressing this trauma and subsequent behaviors may lead to negative effects when children become adults.

Appropriate services and resources are not always accessible to all families that encounter the Child Welfare system. As mentioned in the literature review, rural counties often struggle with finding adequate and accessible resources for their families. It is recommended that policy be implemented which would provide sufficient services for the
identified needs of families in rural areas and major cities.

**Recommendations**

The researchers recommend that future studies focus on the effects Family Reunification versus Family Maintenance has on intergenerational involvement with the Child Welfare system. The researchers further recommend that future studies place more emphasis on the effectiveness of the service components offered within the Child Welfare system. With that focus in mind, future researchers could examine the services offered within each service component in order to determine what is most appropriate to assist families dealing with crisis and child maltreatment. It is also important that these studies focus on sampling from multiple counties from across the state in order to gain a more accurate analysis.

**Limitations**

This research study has a sample size of 23 subjects, which limits the scope of analysis of each individual case. Furthermore, the sample size may be too small to be a true representation of each service component and the effects each service component has on intergenerational involvement with the Child Welfare system. The Child Welfare cases that were analyzed were from Calaveras County, which further limits the opportunity to generalize the study findings to all counties in California or the United States. Due to Calaveras County being a rural and small county, the outcomes may not be the same for larger counties in large cities.

The CWS/CMS only accounts for cases and referrals in the state of California. Therefore, any of the subjects who moved out of state and had Child Welfare
involvement as perpetrators in their new state of residence are not included in this study. Furthermore, there was limited access to cases that originated in other counties in the state of California. The researchers found that if a subject was listed as a perpetrator in another county, the researchers were not able to access the details about the referral or case in that county. This study is also limited because there is no way of determining which subjects do and do not have children. For the subjects who were shown as not having any involvement as perpetrators in the Child Welfare system, it could be because they do not have children or intergenerational abuse does not exist for that subject.

Due to CWS/CMS being a new system utilized in Child Welfare in 1996 and in Calaveras County until 1998, the researchers had to examine various locations of the computer system in order to gather the most accurate data needed. Furthermore, Child Welfare workers were becoming familiar with utilizing the system, which may have led to missing information in some of the cases the researchers reviewed. Due to this, a thorough and accurate analysis cannot be determined for this study.

**Conclusion**

There was a slight difference in outcomes for subjects who received voluntary Family Maintenance versus those who received Family Reunification. Subjects who received Family Reunification had a higher incidence of Child Welfare involvement as adult perpetrators than those who received voluntary Family Maintenance. The analysis of the data also indicated that the subjects who aged out of the Child Welfare system were more likely to have Child Welfare involvement as adult perpetrators. It is crucial for more emphasis to be placed on outcomes within the Child Welfare system.
due to the tremendous emotional cost for children who are removed from their parents. It is also important for social workers and researchers to focus on the outcomes of each service component offered within the Child Welfare system and the effects they have on intergenerational abuse. It is even more important for policy makers to place emphasis on services that will assist a family in crisis to overcome the issues and problems they may be facing in order to help stabilize the family and prevent child maltreatment.
APPENDIX A

Letter of Authorization from Calaveras County
October 23, 2013

Institutional Review Board
Hornet Bookstore, Suite 3400
6000 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95819

To Whom It May Concern:

Calaveras Health and Human Services grant Cristina Barajas and Julie Wuest permission to access data related to their research for their thesis project titled: Protective Custody vs. Family Maintenance: How it impacts the stability of the next generation.

Cristina Barajas and Julie Wuest will be looking at data that shows family trends within a 30 year period. This data will be specific to cases that started within Calaveras County.

Please feel free to contact me at (209) 754-6452 or msawicki@co.calaveras.ca.us if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Mary Sawicki, Director
Calaveras Health and Human Services Agency
509 East St Charles St
San Andreas, Ca 95249
(209)754-6729
(209)754-3293 fax

Our Mission . . .
To create and provide services to individuals and families in Calaveras County that enrich and improve their quality of life.
APPENDIX B

Protocol for the Protection of Human Subjects Approval Letter
To: Cristina Barajas & Julie Wuest  
Date: November 25, 2013  

From: Research Review Committee  

RE: HUMAN SUBJECTS APPLICATION  

Your Human Subjects application for your proposed study, “Protective Custody vs. Family Maintenance: How it impacts the stability of the next generation”, is Approved as Exempt. Discuss your next steps with your thesis/project Advisor.  

Your human subjects Protocol # is: 13-14-045. Please use this number in all official correspondence and written materials relative to your study. Your approval expires one year from this date. Approval carries with it that you will inform the Committee promptly should an adverse reaction occur, and that you will make no modification in the protocol without prior approval of the Committee.  

The committee wishes you the best in your research.  

Research Review Committee members Professors Maria Dinis, Jude Antonyappan, Serge Lee, Francis Yuen, Kisun Nam, Dale Russell,  

Cc: Nam
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