



# A Plan for Evaluating California's Residentially Based Services Reform Project (RBS)

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The RBS Reform Coalition  
RECONNECTING CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES



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## I. Overview of the RBS Evaluation

California's Residentially Based Services Reform Project (RBS) was approved by the state legislature and the Governor on October 11, 2007 with the enactment of Assembly Bill (AB) 1453 which requires the California Department of Social Services

to convene a workgroup of designated public and private stakeholders that will develop a plan for transforming the current system of group care for foster children or youth, and for children with serious emotional disorders into a system of residentially based services.<sup>1</sup>

Included in the provisions of AB1453 are the following regarding how the plans developed pursuant to the act should be evaluated:

(3) Provide for an annual evaluation report, to be prepared jointly by the county and the private nonprofit agency. The evaluation report shall include analyses of the outcomes for children and youth, including achievement of permanency, average lengths of stay, and rates of entry and reentry into group care. The evaluation report shall also include analyses of the involvement of children or youth and their families, client satisfaction, the use of the program by the county, the operation of the program by the private nonprofit agency, payments made to the private nonprofit agency by the county, actual costs incurred by the nonprofit agency for the operation of the program, and the impact of the program on state and county AFDC-FC program costs. The county shall send a copy of each annual evaluation report to the director, and the director shall make these reports available to the Legislature upon request.<sup>2</sup>

Since March 2008, Harder+Co. Community Research has worked closely with the designated public and private stakeholders convened to develop plans for implementing projects for demonstrating models for how a new statewide system of residentially based services might be operationalized. In addition, using a consensus based approach to creating a practical plan for evaluating the models, Harder+Co. has developed plans for addressing each of the evaluation mandates of AB1453 categorized as indicated in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> California Assembly Bill 1453, Chapter 466 An act to add Chapter 12.87 (commencing with Section 18987.7) to Part 6 of Division 9 of the Welfare and Institution Code, relating to foster care, available at [http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/07-08/bill/asm/ab\\_1451-1500/ab\\_1453\\_bill\\_20071011\\_chaptered.pdf](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/pub/07-08/bill/asm/ab_1451-1500/ab_1453_bill_20071011_chaptered.pdf) (last checked on October 30, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

**Table 1: AB1453 RBS Evaluation Mandates Categorized**

Category 1 Outcomes for Children & Youth	Category 2 Systems Operations	Category 3 Fiscal Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of permanency</li> <li>• Average lengths of stay</li> <li>• Rates of entry and reentry into group care</li> <li>• Analyses of the involvement of children or youth and their families</li> <li>• Client satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of the program by the county</li> <li>• The operation of the program by the private nonprofit agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments made to the private nonprofit agency by the county</li> <li>• Actual costs incurred by the nonprofit agency for the operation of the program</li> <li>• The impact of the program on state and county AFDC-FC program costs.</li> </ul>

In addition to addressing these ten statutory mandates for the RBS evaluation, Harder+Co. has participated in stakeholder discussions and incorporated the following stakeholder requests into the evaluation plan<sup>3</sup>.

First, in July and August of 2008, RBS stakeholders agreed that the list of AB1453 mandates for Outcomes for Children and Youth (Category 1) was incomplete and that the RBS evaluation should address the following four additional outcomes for children and youth:

1. Child safety
2. Child well being
3. Child educational progress
4. Child and family voice and choice

Second, in October 2008, the RBS Reform Coalition’s Implementation Leadership Team (ILT) requested the inclusion in the evaluation of two additional fiscal outcomes deemed to be highly relevant based on the emerging local RBS program designs:

1. The impact of the program on state and county Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program costs
2. The impact of the program on state and county Mental Health Services Act (MHSA-Proposition 63)

Third, given the limited resources available for the RBS evaluation, in October 2008, the RBS ILT requested that the implementation of the evaluation be phased in over the course of two years.

Table 2 summarizes the RBS Evaluation Plan and highlights the following details:

1. The ten statutory evaluation mandates included in the AB1453

<sup>3</sup>Please note that it is currently unclear whether the six outcomes requested by RBS stakeholders and the RBS Implementation Leadership Team (ILT) can be measured in addition to the AB1453 mandated outcomes. The evaluation design work is proceeding to include these measures but some of them may not be possible to measure due to budget or logistical limitations.

2. The six evaluation mandates added to the evaluation at the request of RBS stakeholders (i.e. the counties participating in the RBS demonstration)
3. The two evaluation mandates added to the evaluation at the request of the RBS Consortium in response to emerging RBS program designs
4. The evaluation phase-in schedule added at ILT request and in response to budgetary concerns
5. The activities, roles and responsibilities associated with the RBS Evaluation to be undertaken by each of the RBS stakeholder groups. These stakeholder groups are defined as follows:
  - a. **RBS Participating County Staff**

This stakeholder group is composed of staff representing the counties participating in the RBS demonstration. At a minimum this will include county staff responsible for entering data into and managing the CWS/CMS system, county fiscal staff responsible for developing cost finding methodologies and reporting costs, and leadership staff responsible for directing the implementation of the local RBS project and participating in the RBS evaluation focus groups.
  - b. **Staff Designated by RBS Participating Counties**

This stakeholder group is composed of the staff designated by RBS participating counties to collect data from the children, youth and primary caregivers served by the local RBS project. It is anticipated that this group will be composed of representatives of the providers under contract with participating counties to deliver RBS services.
  - c. **Local RBS Data Coordinator**

This stakeholder group is composed of staff designated by RBS participating counties to function as the Local RBS Data Coordinators. Local RBS Data Coordinators will be responsible for ensuring the collection, quality and delivery in cleaned format of all data required by the RBS Evaluation.
  - d. **California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Staff**

This stakeholder group is composed of staff representing CDSS. At a minimum this will include staff responsible for ensuring the collection, quality and delivery of cleaned CWS/CMS data as required by the RBS Evaluation and fiscal staff responsible for participating in the development and implementation of valid and reliable RBS cost finding methodologies.
  - e. **The RBS Evaluation Team**

This stakeholder group is composed of staff designated by the RBS Consortium to implement the RBS Evaluation including representatives of the Consortium, staff of Harder+Co. and county and provider staff who participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee.

**Table 2: Cumulative List of RBS Evaluation Mandates, Phase-In Schedule and Evaluation Activities, Roles and Responsibilities\***

	Year One: 2009	Year Two: 2010	
	Category 1 Outcomes for Children & Youth	Category 2 Systems Operations	Category 3 Fiscal Outcomes
<b>AB1453 Mandated</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Achievement of permanency</li> <li>2. Average lengths of stay</li> <li>3. Rates of entry and reentry into group care</li> <li>4. Analyses of the involvement of children or youth and their families</li> <li>5. Client satisfaction</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. The use of the program by the county</li> <li>11. The operation of the program by the private nonprofit agency</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12. Payments made to the private nonprofit agency by the county</li> <li>13. Actual costs incurred by the nonprofit agency for the operation of the program</li> <li>14. The impact of the program on state and county AFDC-FC program costs.</li> </ol>
<b>Stakeholder Requested**</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Child safety*</li> <li>7. Child well being*</li> <li>8. Child educational progress*</li> <li>9. Child and family voice and choice*</li> </ol>		
<b>RBS Consortium Requested**</b>			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>15. The impact of the program on state and county Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program costs*</li> <li>16. The impact of the program on state and county Mental Health Services Act (MHSA-Proposition 63) program costs*</li> </ol>

\* Additional details on the sequencing of the RBS Evaluation activities, roles and responsibilities can be found in Appendix B.

\*\* Please note that it is currently unclear whether the six outcomes requested by RBS stakeholders and the RBS Implementation Leadership Team (ILT) can be measured in addition to the AB1453 mandated outcomes. The evaluation design work is proceeding to include these measures but some of them may not be possible to measure due to budget or logistical limitations.

**Table 2: Cumulative List of RBS Evaluation Mandates, Phase-In Schedule and Evaluation Activities, Roles and Responsibilities\***

	<b>Year One: 2009</b>	<b>Year Two: 2010</b>
<b>RBS Evaluation Activities, Roles and Responsibilities by Stakeholder Group</b>		
The remainder of this table provides additional information on the activities, roles and responsibilities to be conducted by each of the stakeholder groups in the RBS Evaluation.		
<b>RBS Participating County Staff</b>	1. Enter a "special project" code and start and end dates into CWS/CMS for each child/youth enrolled in RBS	Number 1 continues in Year Two.
	2. Participate in RBS led activities to develop RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)	6. Implement the RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods to calculate year 1 measures for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12 (see above)
	3. Report baseline Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology	7. Report year 1 Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology
	4. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect baseline information on Systems Operations evaluation mandate 10 (see above)	8. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect year 1 information on Systems Operation evaluation mandate 10 (see above)
	5. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	Number 5 continues in Year Two.
<b>Staff Designated by RBS Participating Counties (Providers?)</b>	1. Administer the following three instruments as indicated at intake to RBS, at 90-day intervals during enrollment, and at discharge from RBS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The 65-item Child and Adolescent Needs &amp; Strengths Assessment for Children with Child Welfare Involvement (CANS-CW)*** administered with the involvement of children/youth and their primary caregiver in 15-30 minutes.</li> <li>b. An abbreviated 32-item version of the Youth Services Survey for Youth (YSS)*** administered to RBS enrolled youth &gt; 12 years old with an estimated completion time of ≤ 15 minutes.</li> <li>c. An abbreviated 32-item version of the Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F)*** administered to the primary caregiver of RBS enrolled youth with an estimated completion time of ≤ 15 minutes.</li> </ul>	Number 1 continues in Year Two.

\*\*\* Additional information on the instruments recommended for use in the RBS Evaluation, can be found in Section III.

**Table 2: Cumulative List of RBS Evaluation Mandates, Phase-In Schedule and Evaluation Activities, Roles and Responsibilities\***

	<b>Year One: 2009</b>	<b>Year Two: 2010</b>
<b>Staff Designated by RBS Participating Counties (Providers?)</b> (Continued)	2. Participate in RBS led activities to develop RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)	6. Implement the RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods to calculate year 1 costs for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)
	3. Report baseline Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology	7. Report year 1 Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology
	4. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect baseline information on Systems Operations evaluation mandate 11 (see above)	8. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect year 1 information on Systems Operations evaluation mandate 10 (see above)
	5. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	Number 5 continues in Year Two.
<b>Local RBS Data Coordinator</b>	1. Coordinate, monitor and track local data collection activities to ensure that accurate and complete data on all RBS enrolled children is collected according to the specified intervals	Number 1 continues in Year Two.
	2. Compile completed instruments and conduct quality assurance review, return incomplete/poor quality instruments to local providers and track process to ensure completion	Number 2 continues in Year Two.
	3. "Clean" reviewed instruments of personally identifying information and code for tracking between the CWS/CMS system and the statewide RBS database	Number 3 continues in Year Two.
	4. Submit reviewed, "cleaned" and coded instruments to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database.	Number 4 continues in Year Two.
	5. Interface and coordinate with RBS providers, county staff, CDSS and Harder+Co. to resolve data collection issues as needed	Number 5 continues in Year Two.
	6. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	Number 6 continues in Year Two.
<b>California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Staff</b>	1. Compile, clean, analyze and report to RBS Evaluation Team on CWS/CMS data entered by counties on RBS enrolled children relative to evaluation mandates 1, 2, 3 and 6 (see above)	Number 1 continues in Year Two.
	2. Participate in RBS led activities to develop RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)	5. Participate as needed in the implementation of the RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods.

**Table 2: Cumulative List of RBS Evaluation Mandates, Phase-In Schedule and Evaluation Activities, Roles and Responsibilities\***

	<b>Year One: 2009</b>	<b>Year Two: 2010</b>
<b>California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Staff</b> (Continued)	3. Review and approve for use in the RBS project the cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above) developed by participating counties and providers.	N/A
	4. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	Number 4 continues in Year Two.
<b>RBS Evaluation Team</b>	1. Enter, compile, and analyze data to determine baselines for Outcomes for Children and Youth (evaluation mandates 1-9), Systems Operations (evaluation mandates 10-11) and Fiscal Outcomes (evaluation mandates 12-16) (see above)	6. Enter, compile, and analyze data to determine year 1 measures for Outcomes for Children and Youth (evaluation mandates 1-9), Systems Operations (evaluation mandates 10-11) and Fiscal Outcomes (evaluation mandates 12-16) (see above)
	2. Develop county specific qualitative data collection focus group protocols based on the requirements of AB 1453 and county-specific RBS plans detailed in approved Voluntary Agreements to collect baseline data on Systems Operations mandates 10 and 11 (see above)	7. Revise as needed county specific qualitative data collection focus group protocols based on the requirements of AB 1453 and county-specific RBS plans detailed in approved Voluntary Agreements to collect year 1 data on Systems Operations mandates 10 and 11
	3. Schedule and conduct 90 minute qualitative data collection focus groups to collect baseline data on Systems Operations evaluation mandates 10 and 11 (see above)	8. Schedule and conduct 90 minute qualitative data collection focus groups to collect year 1 data on Systems Operations evaluation mandates 10 and 11 (see above)
	4. Prepare report on baseline data for all mandated outcomes	9. Prepare report on year 1 measures for all mandated outcomes
	5. Co-Chair the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee with representative from Casey Family Programs.	Number 5 continues in Year Two.

## II. Guiding Principles of the RBS Evaluation

At the outset of the RBS program development and evaluation design processes RBS stakeholders agreed on the following seven basic principles to guide the evaluation process:

The RBS evaluation should be designed to:

1. Yield the information needed to meet the evaluation mandates of AB1453
2. "Follow and not drive" the RBS program design
3. Be as unobtrusive as possible
4. Be affordable
5. Have minimal administrative and fiscal burden on the participating providers and counties
6. Provide some of the clinical and management information needed by the local RBS program stakeholders to monitor local program operations
7. Be acceptable to all RBS stakeholders.

The RBS evaluation design process has adhered to the seven principles as follows:

Principle 1: *Yield the information needed to meet the evaluation mandates of AB1453*

Throughout the evaluation design process RBS stakeholders have continually "checked in" with the list of the ten AB1453 mandates to ensure that the RBS evaluation design addresses each of the mandates and remains within their scope. As noted above, the sole departures from the list of ten statutory mandates have been the six additional mandates added only after careful deliberation with RBS stakeholders and the ILT and in response to their requests.

Principles 2-5: *"Follow and not drive" the RBS program design, Be as unobtrusive as possible, Be affordable, and Have minimal administrative and fiscal burden on the participating providers and counties*

The RBS evaluation design has adhered to these four principles through its flexible integration with the emerging local RBS program models and their funding structures. This flexibility has been achieved by maximizing the use of pre-existing data measures and systems with which the RBS sites are familiar (Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) and the Youth Services Survey for Youth (YSS) and Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F)) and including only additional data collection systems that a consensus of the participating sites have reviewed and approved and have already begun utilizing (the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment for Children with Child Welfare Involvement (CANS-CW))<sup>4</sup>. Thus, by "following and no driving" the program development process, the RBS evaluation design has achieved measures of unobtrusiveness,

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<sup>4</sup> Additional information on the instruments proposed for inclusion in the RBS Evaluation can be found in Section III.

affordability and minimal administrative and fiscal burden by building upon currently existing and “found” data collection systems with which the RBS participating sites are familiar, comfortable and willing to endorse.

Principles 6 and 7: *Provide some of the clinical and management information needed by the local RBS program stakeholders to monitor local program operations, and Be acceptable to all RBS stakeholders.*

The RBS evaluation design has adhered to these two principles by incorporating the stakeholder requested clinical measures of child safety, child well being, child educational progress and child and family voice and choice into its design and by using a consensus based decision making model with stakeholder input and approval throughout the evaluation design process.

### **III. Brief Descriptions of the Data Collection Instruments to be Used in the RBS Evaluation**

Following is a description of each of the proposed data collection instruments for use in the RBS evaluation including the rationale for the use of each and additional information on the workload associated with the use of each.

#### **Child Welfare Services/Case Management System (CWS/CMS)**

##### **Rationale for its Use in the Residentially Based Services Initiative (RBS)**

RBS participating counties currently enter client-specific data into the CWS/CMS system independent of the RBS project. Use of this readily accessible pre-existing data represents little or no increase in cost or workload for RBS participating counties.

##### **Estimated Workload Associated with its Use**

Participation in the RBS evaluation may require county staff to enter data into additional fields in the CWS/CMS system including but not limited to the special projects code field and start and end date fields. This represents a negligible increase in county workload. Counties requested the inclusion of these additional fields and have agreed to absorb the workload for completing them.

#### **The Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment for Children with Child Welfare Involvement (CANS-CW)**

##### **Rationale for its Use in the Residentially Based Services Initiative (RBS)**

The CANS-CW is a nationally recognized and validated assessment instrument currently in use in jurisdictions and locations throughout the United States. The instrument is available for use free of charge and is designed to be tailored specifically to local needs. Two counties participating in the RBS project – Los Angeles County and San Francisco County – had initiated use of the CANS prior to the implementation of the RBS project. All RBS sites have had the opportunity to participate in a workshop with Dr. John Lyons – the developer of the CANS – which included a detailed review of the use of the CANS and examples of report templates currently in use at other

sites using the instrument. Moreover, all RBS sites participated in a comprehensive item-by-item review of the instrument and contributed to deciding which items to include and which to exclude. Three sites have endorsed the use of the sixty-five item CANS-CW in the RBS project and one site uses an alternative assessment instrument – the CAFAS (the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale) - that can be correlated with the CANS-CW.<sup>5</sup> Use of the CANS-CW in RBS will permit the RBS evaluation to create specialized indices of “Child Well Being” that would not be possible with pre-existing data available from other sources. Furthermore, use of the CANS-CW in the RBS evaluation will permit studies comparing the outcomes of RBS enrolled children with outcomes of children at other US sites where the CANS is currently in use should such a comparison study be required by the California State Legislature.

### **Estimated Workload Associated with its Use**

The CANS-CW was designed by users and is highly “user-friendly.” The instrument can be administered by a trained, certified and experienced assessor familiar with the child and family being assessed in fifteen to thirty minutes. A prerequisite for the use of the CANS-CW is training and certification of trainee achievement of an acceptable inter-rater reliability score. CANS training is provided differently in different locations and can be delivered via a web-based training program. Live training can be provided by local trainers who have completed and been certified as CANS trainers. The amount of time needed for CANS training varies by individual based on her or his capacity to achieve the required inter-rater reliability score. The use of the CANS-CW represents an increase in workload for individuals who will be trained in its use and will be conducting CANS assessments of RBS enrolled children. RBS participating counties that will be using the CANS have expressed willingness to absorb the additional workload associated with training in and use of the CANS-CW in their RBS projects.

In addition, the cumulative workload associated with the administration of the CANS-CW will vary greatly depending on the administration intervals RBS participating sites choose to employ in the RBS evaluation. Harder+Co. has recommended administration of the instrument at intake to RBS and at 90-day intervals until discharge from the program. However, RBS participating sites may choose to increase or decrease the frequency of the data collection interval in their local programs. The minimal data collection interval required for participation in the RBS evaluation is intake and discharge. The maximum interval at which data will be collected and analyzed by the RBS evaluation is 90 days. CANS-CW data collected by RBS sites at intervals more frequent than 90 days will not be collected in the RBS evaluation.

## **The Youth Services Survey for Youth (YSS)**

### **Rationale for its Use in the Residentially Based Services Initiative (RBS)**

The Youth Services Survey for Youth (YSS) has been promulgated by the California Department of Mental Health and is currently in use in all RBS participating sites. All RBS sites have had the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive item-by-item review of the YSS and have endorsed the use of an abbreviated version of it in the RBS project. Use of the YSS items would permit

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<sup>5</sup> Note that in San Bernardino County – the site that will be using the CAFAS - the prospective provider for the RBS project uses the CANS as an assessment instrument in its programs so the RBS evaluation may have access to CANS data on children served by this site. However, data sharing agreements between the RBS evaluation and the provider organization that will be subject to county approval cannot be pursued until the provider has been formally selected and contracted to be an RBS provider.

studies comparing the outcomes of RBS enrolled children and youth with the outcomes of non-RBS children and youth should such a comparison study be required by the California State Legislature and should the YSS data on non-RBS enrolled children and youth be available from the California Department of Mental Health.

### **Estimated Workload Associated with its Use**

The YSS is a self-administered satisfaction survey currently in use in the RBS participating counties and stakeholders report that staff and youth in those counties are familiar with it. However, the RBS evaluation will require the distribution of a specially designed abbreviated version of the YSS to RBS enrolled youth who are 13 to 18 years old. This use of a YSS instrument specialized to the needs of RBS represents an increase in staff and youth workload. RBS participating counties have expressed willingness to absorb the additional workload. Youth can choose not to accept the additional workload by choosing not to complete the survey.

The cumulative workload associated with the administration of the YSS will vary greatly depending on the administration intervals RBS participating sites choose to employ in the RBS evaluation. Harder+Co. has recommended administration of the instrument at intake to RBS and at 90-day intervals until discharge from the program. However, RBS participating sites may choose to increase or decrease the frequency of the interval in their local programs. The minimal interval required for participation in the RBS evaluation is intake and discharge. The maximum interval at which data will be collected and analyzed by the RBS evaluation is 90 days. YSS data collected by RBS sites at intervals more frequent than 90 days will not be collected in the RBS evaluation.

## **The Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F)**

### **Rationale for its Use in the Residentially Based Services Initiative (RBS)**

The Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F) has been promulgated by the California Department of Mental Health and is currently in use in all RBS participating sites. All RBS sites have had the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive item-by-item review of the YSS-F and have endorsed the use of an abbreviated version of it in the RBS project. Use of the YSS-F items would permit studies comparing the outcomes of RBS enrolled children and youth with the outcomes of non-RBS children and youth should such a comparison study be required by the California State Legislature and should the YSS-F data on non-RBS enrolled children and youth be available from the California Department of Mental Health.

### **Estimated Workload Associated with its Use**

The YSS-F is a self-administered satisfaction survey currently in use in the RBS participating counties and stakeholders report that staff and primary caregivers in those counties are familiar with it. However, the RBS evaluation will require the distribution of a specially designed abbreviated version of the YSS-F to the primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children. This use of a YSS-F instrument specialized to the needs of RBS represents an increase in staff and primary caregiver workload. RBS participating counties have expressed willingness to absorb the additional workload. Primary caregivers can choose not to accept the additional workload by choosing not to complete the survey.

The cumulative workload associated with the administration of the YSS-F will vary greatly depending on the administration intervals RBS participating sites choose to employ in the RBS evaluation. Harder+Co. has recommended administration of the instrument at intake to RBS and at 90-day intervals until discharge from the program. However, RBS participating sites may choose to increase or decrease the frequency of the interval in their local programs. The minimal interval required for participation in the RBS evaluation is intake and discharge. The maximum interval at which data will be collected and analyzed by the RBS evaluation is 90 days. YSS-F data collected by RBS sites at intervals more frequent than 90 days will not be collected in the RBS evaluation.

## **IV. Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation**

Appendix A provides a detailed review of each of the evaluation mandates in the RBS Evaluation including the research question, instrumentation, estimated workload and roles and responsibilities associated with each.

## **V. Preliminary Timetable<sup>6</sup> of RBS Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities**

Appendix B provides a preliminary proposed timetable for the implementation of the roles and responsibilities associated with the RBS Evaluation. However, it is important to note that the table contents are *proposed* by Harder+Co. and have not been reviewed and approved by the RBS Implementation Leadership Team nor the RBS stakeholders. In order to finalize these proposed roles, Harder+Co. requires:

1. Approval from the RBS ILT and authorization to proceed in planning for and developing these roles and responsibilities.
2. Explicit confirmation from the Evaluation Subcommittee on the role of the Data Coordinator position.
3. A confirmed list of the contracted provider agencies to be included in the RBS provider network to begin the process of developing the provider level data collection, quality assurance and coordination capacity,
4. Additional discussions with CDSS to further define and finalize roles and responsibilities with regard to processing CWS/CMS data for inclusion and a data sharing agreement, and
5. Clearer definition from the ILT of the parameters for including web-based data collection systems in the RBS project.

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<sup>6</sup> Dates and deliverables are contingent upon local RBS program development and implementation.

## **VI. Current Key Questions to be Answered**

Following is a list of the current key questions to be answered as we proceed with developing the RBS Evaluation:

1. Are the roles and responsibilities associated with the RBS Evaluation acceptable to stakeholder groups including the participating counties and CDSS?
2. How do the RBS participating counties envision developing the RBS Local Data Coordinator role?
3. Which data collection interval will the participating counties select? The minimum of intake and exit? The recommended 90-day interval? Another interval?
4. How will the participating counties ensure that all data collected are valid, "cleaned" of identifying information, and correctly coded for cross-matching with CWS/CMS data?

Harder+Co. will be taking steps during the month of December, 2008 to obtain answers to these questions.

**Appendix A:**  
**Overview of Measures Included  
in the RBS Evaluation**

## Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation

Evaluation Mandate	Research Question	Data Source/ Instrument	Data Collection Completed By	Data Collection Interval	Data Collection Workload	Data Collection Coordinated by
1. Achievement of permanency.	What impact has the local RBS project had on children enrolled in the RBS project with regard to their a. Legal permanency status, and b. Ability to develop a permanent lifelong connection with a caring adult.	Selected items in the CWS/CMS.	County staff.	Intake and exit.	Three additional fields to be completed in the CWS/CMS system once for all RBS mandates for each RBS enrolled child: (i) Special projects code and(ii) start date at intake and (iii) end date at exit.	CDSS staff interfaces with the RBS Local Data Coordinator and county staff to compile, clean, and analyze data entered into CWS/CMS by county staff, to calculate measures and to report them to Harder+Co.
		Selected items on the CANS-CW.	County designated staff (Providers?).	Minimum Intake and exit. Maximum every 90 days.	Varies by interval. 15-30 minutes to complete the CANS-CW.	RBS Local Data Coordinator coordinates data collection, compiles, reviews and cleans completed instruments and submits them to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database for compilation and analysis.
		Selected items on the YSS.	RBS enrolled youth ages 13 to 18.		Varies by interval. YSS survey completion time 15 minutes.	
		Selected items on the YSS-F.	Primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth.		Varies by interval. YSS-F survey completion time 15 minutes.	
2. Average lengths of stay.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the average lengths of stay in residential treatment facilities of children enrolled in the RBS program?	Selected items in the CWS/CMS.	County staff.	Intake and exit.	None.	CDSS staff interfaces with the RBS Local Data Coordinator and county staff to compile, clean, and analyze data entered into CWS/CMS by county staff, to calculate measures and to report them to Harder+Co.
3. Rates of entry and reentry into group care.	What impact has the local RBS project had on rates of entry and reentry into group care of children enrolled in the RBS program?	Selected items in the CWS/CMS.	County staff.	Intake and exit.	None.	CDSS staff interfaces with the RBS Local Data Coordinator and county staff to compile, clean, and analyze data entered into CWS/CMS by county staff, to calculate measures and to report them to Harder+Co.

**Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation**

<b>Evaluation Mandate</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Data Source/ Instrument</b>	<b>Data Collection Completed By</b>	<b>Data Collection Interval</b>	<b>Data Collection Workload</b>	<b>Data Collection Coordinated by</b>
4. Analyses of the involvement of children or youth and their families.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the involvement of children or youth and their families in treatment planning and treatment?	Selected YSS items.	RBS enrolled youth ages 13 to 18.	Minimum of Intake and exit.	Varies by interval. YSS survey completion time 15 minutes.	RBS Local Data Coordinator coordinates data collection, compiles, reviews and cleans completed instruments and submits them to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database for compilation and analysis.
		Selected YSS-F items.	Primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth.	Maximum every 90 days.	Varies by interval. YSS-F survey completion time 15 minutes.	
		Selected CANS-CW items.	County designated staff (Providers?).		Varies by interval. CANS-CW completion time up to 30 minutes for trained and certified CANS-CW user familiar with the child and family.	
5. Client satisfaction.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the satisfaction of the children or youth and families enrolled in RBS?	Selected YSS items.	RBS enrolled Youth ages 13 to 18.	Minimum of Intake and Exit	Varies by interval. YSS survey completion time 15 minutes.	RBS Local Data Coordinator coordinates data collection, compiles, reviews and cleans completed instruments and submits them to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database for compilation and analysis.
		Selected YSS-F items.	Primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth.	Maximum every 90 days	Varies by interval. YSS-F survey completion time 15 minutes.	
		Selected CANS-CW items.	County designated staff (Providers?).		Varies by interval. CANS-CW completion time up to 30 minutes for trained and certified CANS-CW user familiar with the child and family.	

## Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation

Evaluation Mandate	Research Question	Data Source/ Instrument	Data Collection Completed By	Data Collection Interval	Data Collection Workload	Data Collection Coordinated by
6. Child safety.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the incidence and recurrence of substantiated maltreatment in foster care of RBS enrolled children?	Selected items in the CWS/CMS.	County staff.	Intake and exit.	None.	CDSS staff interfaces with the RBS Local Data Coordinator and county staff to compile, clean, and analyze data entered into CWS/CMS by county staff, to calculate measures and to report them to Harder+Co.
7. Child well being.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the well being of children enrolled in the RBS project?	Selected YSS items.	RBS enrolled youth ages 13 to 18.	Minimum of Intake and exit.	Varies by interval. YSS survey completion time 15 minutes.	RBS Local Data Coordinator coordinates data collection, compiles, reviews and cleans completed instruments and submits them to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database for compilation and analysis.
		Selected YSS-F items.	Primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth.	Maximum every 90 days.	Varies by interval. YSS-F survey completion time 15 minutes.	
		Selected CANS-CW items.	County designated staff (Providers?).		Varies by interval. CANS-CW completion time up to 30 minutes for trained and certified CANS-CW user familiar with the child and family.	
8. Child educational progress.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the educational progress of RBS enrolled children?	Selected YSS items.	RBS enrolled Youth ages 13 to 18.	Minimum of Intake and exit.	Varies by interval. YSS survey completion time 15 minutes.	RBS Local Data Coordinator coordinates data collection, compiles, reviews and cleans completed instruments and submits them to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database for compilation and
		Selected YSS-F items.	Primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth.	Maximum every 90 days.	Varies by interval. YSS-F survey completion time 15 minutes.	

## Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation

Evaluation Mandate	Research Question	Data Source/ Instrument	Data Collection Completed By	Data Collection Interval	Data Collection Workload	Data Collection Coordinated by
8. Child educational progress (continued).		Selected CANS-CW items.	County designated staff (Providers?).		Varies by interval. CANS-CW completion time up to 30 minutes for trained and certified CANS-CW user familiar with the child and family.	analysis.
9. Child and family voice and choice.	What impact has the local RBS project had on RBS enrolled children and their families' sense of having a "voice and choice" in their treatment experience?	Selected YSS items.	RBS enrolled Youth ages 13 to 18.	Minimum of Intake and exit.  Maximum every 90 days.	Varies by interval. YSS survey completion time 15 minutes.	RBS Local Data Coordinator coordinates data collection, compiles, reviews and cleans completed instruments and submits them to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database for compilation and analysis.
		Selected YSS-F items.	Primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth.		Varies by interval. YSS-F survey completion time 15 minutes.	
		Selected CANS-CW items.	County designated staff (Providers?).		Varies by interval. CANS-CW completion time up to 30 minutes for trained and certified CANS-CW user familiar with the child and family.	
10. The use of the program by the county.	What significant changes is the county making as part of its implementation of the RBS project in order to achieve its goals?	90-minute focus groups with local RBS stakeholders conducted via telephone using a standard protocol of questions derived from AB1453 RBS program mandates and approved Voluntary Agreements.	Harder+Co.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Up to 2 hours for scheduling and participating in a 90-minute focus group.	RBS Local Data Coordinator and Harder+Co staff.

## Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation

Evaluation Mandate	Research Question	Data Source/ Instrument	Data Collection Completed By	Data Collection Interval	Data Collection Workload	Data Collection Coordinated by
11. The operation of the program by the private nonprofit agency.	What significant changes has the provider made to transform its traditional group home program into an RBS program in order to achieve its goals?	90-minute focus groups with local RBS stakeholders conducted via telephone using a standard protocol of questions derived from AB1453 RBS program mandates and approved Voluntary Agreements.	Harder+Co.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Up to 2 hours for scheduling and participating in a 90-minute focus group.	RBS Local Data Coordinator and Harder+Co staff.
12. Payments made to the private nonprofit agency by the county.	What impact has the local RBS project had on payments made to the nonprofit agency by the county?	County-developed and RBS approved standard methodology for validly and reliably documenting the average cumulative per child per annum cost to the county of providing RBS services.	County staff.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Unknown.	RBS Local Data Coordinator, RBS Consortium Fiscal Subcommittee and Harder+Co staff.
13. Actual costs incurred by the nonprofit agency for the operation of the program.	What impact has the local RBS project had on the actual costs incurred by the nonprofit agency for the operation of the program?	County-developed and RBS approved standard methodology for validly and reliably documenting the average cumulative per child per annum cost to the provider of providing RBS services.	RBS providers. County staff.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Unknown.	RBS Local Data Coordinator, RBS Consortium Fiscal Subcommittee and Harder+Co staff.

**Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation**

<b>Evaluation Mandate</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Data Source/ Instrument</b>	<b>Data Collection Completed By</b>	<b>Data Collection Interval</b>	<b>Data Collection Workload</b>	<b>Data Collection Coordinated by</b>
14. The impact of the program on state and county AFDC-FC program costs.	What impact has the local RBS project had on state and county AFDC-FC program costs?	County-developed and RBS approved standard methodology for validly and reliably documenting the average cumulative per child per annum state and county AFDC-FC program costs of providing RBS services.	County staff. CDSS staff.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Unknown.	RBS Local Data Coordinator, RBS Consortium Fiscal Subcommittee and Harder+Co staff.
15. The impact of the program on state and county Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) Program costs.	What impact has the local RBS project had on state and county EPSDT program costs?	County-developed and RBS approved standard methodology for validly and reliably documenting the average cumulative per child per annum state and county EPSDT program costs of providing RBS services.	County staff. CDSS staff.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Unknown.	RBS Local Data Coordinator, RBS Consortium Fiscal Subcommittee and Harder+Co staff.

**Appendix A: Overview of Measures Included in the RBS Evaluation**

<b>Evaluation Mandate</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Data Source/ Instrument</b>	<b>Data Collection Completed By</b>	<b>Data Collection Interval</b>	<b>Data Collection Workload</b>	<b>Data Collection Coordinated by</b>
16. The impact of the program on state and county Mental Health Services Act (MHSA-Proposition 63) program costs.	What impact has the local RBS project had on state and county MHSA - Proposition 63 program costs?	County-developed and RBS approved standard methodology for validly and reliably documenting the average cumulative per child per annum state and county MHSA-Proposition 63 program costs of providing RBS services.	County staff. CDSS staff.	At year one and at annual intervals thereafter.	Unknown	RBS Local Data Coordinator, RBS Consortium Fiscal Subcommittee and Harder+Co staff.

**Appendix B:**  
**Preliminary Timetable of RBS Evaluation**  
**Roles and Responsibilities**

**Appendix B: Preliminary Timetable\* of RBS Evaluation Roles & Responsibilities**

	Year One: 2009												Year Two: 2010											
	Local RBS Implementation																							
	1			2			3			4			1		2		3		4					
Quarters →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Months →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<b>RBS Participating County Staff</b>																								
1. Enter a "special project" code and start and end dates into CWS/CMS for each child/youth enrolled in RBS							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
2. Participate in RBS led activities to develop RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■													
3. Report baseline Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology										■														
4. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect baseline information on Systems Operations evaluation mandate 10 (see above)										■														
5. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■		■			■			■		■
6. Implement the RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods to calculate year 1 measures for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12 (see above)													■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
7. Report year 1 Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology																								■
8. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect year 1 information on Systems Operation evaluation mandate 10 (see above)																								■

\* Dates and deliverables are contingent upon local RBS program development and implementation.

**Appendix B: Preliminary Timetable\* of RBS Evaluation Roles & Responsibilities**

	Year One: 2009												Year Two: 2010														
	Local RBS Implementation																										
	1			2			3			4			1		2		3		4								
Quarters →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
Months →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
<b>Staff Designated by RBS Participating Counties (Providers?)</b>																											
1. Administer the following three instruments as indicated at intake to RBS, at 90-day intervals during enrollment, and at discharge from RBS:																											
a. The 65-item Child and Adolescent Needs & Strengths Assessment for Children with Child Welfare Involvement (CANS-CW)** administered with the involvement of children/youth and their primary caregiver in 15-30 minutes.																											
b. An abbreviated 32-item version of the Youth Services Survey for Youth (YSS)** administered to RBS enrolled youth > 12 years old with an estimated completion time of ≤ 15 minutes.																											
c. An abbreviated 32-item version of the Youth Services Survey for Families (YSS-F)** administered to the primary caregiver of RBS enrolled children and youth with an estimated completion time of ≤ 15 minutes.																											
2. Participate in RBS led activities to develop RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																	
3. Report baseline Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology										■																	
4. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect baseline information on Systems Operations evaluation mandate 11 (see above)										■																	
5. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
6. Implement the RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods to calculate year 1 costs for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)													■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
7. Report year 1 Fiscal Outcomes costs calculated using the RBS approved cost finding methodology																							■				
8. Participate in a 90 minute qualitative data collection focus group to collect year 1 information on Systems Operations evaluation mandate 10 (see above)																					■						

\* Dates and deliverables are contingent upon local RBS program development and implementation

\*\*More information on the instruments recommended for use in the RBS Evaluation can be found in Section III.

**Appendix B: Preliminary Timetable\* of RBS Evaluation Roles & Responsibilities**

	Year One: 2009												Year Two: 2010														
	Local RBS Implementation																										
	1			2			3			4			1		2		3		4								
Quarters →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
Months →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
<b>RBS Local Data Coordinator</b>																											
1. Coordinate, monitor and track local data collection activities to ensure that accurate and complete data on all RBS enrolled children is collected according to the specified intervals							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
2. Compile completed instruments and conduct quality assurance review, return incomplete/poor quality instruments to local providers and track process to ensure completion							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
3. "Clean" reviewed instruments of personally identifying information and code for tracking between the CWS/CMS system and the statewide RBS database							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
4. Submit reviewed, "cleaned" and coded instruments to Harder+Co. for entry into the statewide database.							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
5. Interface and coordinate with RBS providers, county staff, CDSS and Harder+Co. to resolve data collection issues as needed							■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
6. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee							■	■	■	■	■	■		■			■			■			■			■	
<b>California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Staff</b>																											
1. Compile, clean, analyze and report to RBS Evaluation Team on CWS/CMS data entered by counties on RBS enrolled children relative to evaluation mandates 1, 2, 3 and 6 (see above)									■		■			■			■			■			■			■	
2. Participate in RBS led activities to develop RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above)	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■																	
3. Review and approve for use in the RBS project the cost finding methods for the Fiscal Outcomes evaluation mandates 12-16 (see above) developed by participating counties and providers.										■																	
4. Participate in the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■			■			■			■			■	
5. Participate as needed in the implementation of the RBS approved valid and reliable cost finding methods.										■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

\* Dates and deliverables are contingent upon local RBS program development and implementation

**Appendix B: Preliminary Timetable\* of RBS Evaluation Roles & Responsibilities**

	Year One: 2009												Year Two: 2010											
	Local RBS Implementation																							
	1			2			3			4			1		2		3		4					
Quarters →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Months →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
<b>RBS Evaluation Team</b>																								
1. Enter, compile, and analyze data to determine baselines for Outcomes for Children and Youth (evaluation mandates 1-9), Systems Operations (evaluation mandates 10-11) and Fiscal Outcomes (evaluation mandates 12-16) (see above)							■	■	■	■	■	■												
2. Develop county specific qualitative data collection focus group protocols based on the requirements of AB 1453 and county-specific RBS plans detailed in approved Voluntary Agreements to collect baseline data on Systems Operations mandates 10 and 11 (see above)										■	■													
3. Schedule and conduct 90 minute qualitative data collection focus groups to collect baseline data on Systems Operations evaluation mandates 10 and 11 (see above)													■											
4. Prepare report on baseline data for all mandated outcomes																							■	
5. Co-Chair the RBS Evaluation Subcommittee with representative from Casey Family Programs.	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		■			■			■				■
6. Enter, compile, and analyze data to determine year 1 measures for Outcomes for Children and Youth (evaluation mandates 1-9), Systems Operations (evaluation mandates 10-11) and Fiscal Outcomes (evaluation mandates 12-16) (see above)													■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
7. Revise as needed county specific qualitative data collection focus group protocols based on the requirements of AB 1453 and county-specific RBS plans detailed in approved Voluntary Agreements to collect year 1 data on Systems Operations mandates 10 and 11																						■	■	
8. Schedule and conduct 90 minute qualitative data collection focus groups to collect year 1 data on Systems Operations evaluation mandates 10 and 11 (see above)																							■	
9. Prepare report on year 1 measures for all mandated outcomes																							■	

\* Dates and deliverables are contingent upon local RBS program development and implementation