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KIRI TORRE
Chief Executive Officer/Clerk
Superior Court of CA County of Santa Clara
BY *Kiri Torre* DEPUTY

**THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
JUVENILE COURT**

**Standing Order
Authorizing DFCS to Release Copies of Court Reports
to Group Home and Wraparound Service Providers**

The Court makes the following findings:

At any given time approximately 200 foster children under the supervision of the Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) require placement in a licensed group home due to their special behavioral needs.

Group homes provide a valuable service to children who are dependents of the Santa Clara County Juvenile Court.

Group homes constitute "agencies providing treatment or supervision" to dependent children within the meaning of Welfare and Institutions Code section 827 and are authorized to receive relevant confidential juvenile information.

In order for group homes to adequately evaluate, supervise and treat the children who are or may be placed in their care, it is necessary for group home directors, managers and clinical staff to have relevant information about the child and his or her family. This information is necessary for group homes to adequately plan for and meet the physical, psychological, developmental and educational needs of children. The best source of information about children and their families comes from court reports prepared by DFCS and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), court orders, and other documents received by DFCS which are relevant to the child's placement needs.


Further, the Court finds that providers of "wrap-around" services described by Welfare and Institutions Code sections 18250 - 18256 constitute "agencies providing treatment and supervision" to dependent children and are authorized to receive relevant confidential juvenile information. Wraparound services are designed as an alternative for dependent children who otherwise would require high-level group home placement. Wraparound services allow dependent children to avoid group home placement through the provision of strength-based, collaborative service alternatives to the children and their families or other approved caretakers.

Based on these Findings, and good cause appearing, the Court makes the following Order.

ORDER

The Court authorizes DFCS to provide copies of court reports, court orders, and other documents received by DFCS which are relevant to a dependent child's placement needs, including psychological evaluations of the child, but excluding psychological evaluations of a parent, to the child's group home director, manager and clinical staff. The Court also authorizes DFCS to provide copies of these documents to group home providers who are evaluating a child for potential placement in their program. These documents must be returned to DFCS or destroyed if the child is not placed in the group home, or upon completion of the child's placement in the group home. The Court also authorizes DFCS to provide these documents to clinical staff at wraparound programs approved by DFCS. The documents must be returned to DFCS or destroyed upon completion of the wraparound services. Group home providers and wraparound service providers are bound by the confidentiality provisions of Welfare and Institutions Code section 827 and cannot further disseminate the documents unless authorized by law. The director of the group home or wrap service provider is responsible for safeguarding these documents in a manner consistent with the laws governing confidentiality and ensuring that the documents are shared with staff only on a "need to know" basis.

4/18/08
Date



HONORABLE KATHERINE LUCERO
Supervising Judge of the Juvenile Dependency Court

[L. Michael Clark, Senior Lead Deputy County Counsel]