



CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL



The next **Child Welfare Council Annual Report** covering the period **from July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**, will feature highlights on the work of the Council and its committees. Please use this template to write your committee report and submit it to Sarah.Saria@jud.ca.gov no later than **October 3, 2024**.

Readers may not be familiar with acronyms and abbreviations. Please fully write out acronyms and abbreviations the first time you use them and be consistent in using the same acronym or abbreviation throughout the rest of the report.

Readers may not be familiar with policies, organizations, or programs that are well known to your committee. Please consider including brief explanations so readers can better understand your report.

July 2023 through June 2024 Activities and Accomplishments: Please briefly list major activities and accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

Concerns or Challenges: Describe any issues that you feel need the Council's attention in order to maximize opportunities to address barriers to the work of the Council.

2024 – 2025 Goals & Objectives: Indicate your committee's goals and objectives for the coming year.

Committee/ Task Force Name	Child Welfare Council, Behavioral Health Committee
Purpose	<p>The Behavioral Health Committee was formed out of a clear consensus of the Child Welfare Council that despite statewide efforts to improve access to behavioral health services for child welfare-involved youth and those at imminent risk of involvement, there are still significant challenges preventing youth and families from receiving comprehensive and integrated services and supports. Committee members include state agency leadership, representatives from the Governor's Office and State Legislature, children's behavioral health providers, county representatives, caregivers, and advocates.</p> <p>The Committee is tasked with developing best practice recommendations to guide policy and inform statewide efforts to address the behavioral health needs of children and youth more effectively in the child welfare system.</p>
July 2023 through June 2024	The Behavioral Health Committee's Universal Array document was approved by the Child Welfare Council in December 2021. This document drove much of our work for the subsequent months. This document in

Activities and	<p>addition to the Policy Recommendations focused on improving access to care, creating a robust array of services statewide, and developing and tracking meaningful outcomes for youth involved in Child Welfare.</p> <p>The Behavioral Health Committee had robust meeting participation across its quarterly convenings from July 2023-June 2024. The bulk of our focus for these meetings this year was around developing and tracking meaningful outcomes for youth involved in Child Welfare.</p> <p>There was consensus amongst our group that we need to ensure our child welfare involved youth have access to high quality care. There was also consensus that there are tools being used statewide that could help us understand the outcomes for these youth. Data around access to care and Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (acronym CANS) data for every youth are the areas where our group coalesced on focusing.</p> <p>We had presentations from the California Department of Social Services and Department of Health Care Services regarding their work around CANS integration across their systems, at the local level, and the rate reform work associated with the CANS. We also had Dr. John Lyons join us to discuss the potential for CANS as a mechanism for tracking system level outcomes for child welfare involved youth.</p> <p>Daniel Webster, and the data linkages and information sharing committee joined our meetings as well to more fully understand the Child Welfare Indicators Project and mechanisms for tracking meaningful behavioral health outcomes over time.</p> <p>Additionally, our committee engaged local providers and county staff to hear common challenges at the local level with tracking outcomes, use of CANS, and communication across departments.</p> <p>Finally, a sub-group of our larger committee met outside of the committee itself to develop a set of recommendations for the full Child Welfare Council to consider.</p> <p>These recommendations are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrated Data Systems (state & local) 2. One CANS for each youth 3. Use of CANS to track needs and strengths at the systems level 4. Training and ongoing technical assistance to ensure fidelity to the CANS <p>These recommendations along with a paper outlining the detail of each will be presented to the full Child Welfare Council at the September 2024 meeting as an informational item. Pending further input from the Council an action item to accept these recommendations will be brought to the Council in December.</p>
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Concerns or Challenges	The rate reform proposal associated with the CANS did pose a challenge for the group as it is hard to use a tool to determine level of care and funding and also use it as a tool for tracking outcomes.
2024 - 2025 Goals/Objectives	The hope for the coming year will be to work with our committee to implement the recommendations of this body.