



CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL



PREVENTION and EARLY INTERVENTION STATEWIDE CITIZEN REVIEW PANEL **2016 Report and Recommendations**

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The Prevention and Early Intervention Committee of the California Child Welfare Council identifies and promotes services and systems that prevent the need for families to enter the child welfare system and assists them in achieving family and child well-being. Concurrently it also fulfills the responsibilities of a Citizen Review Panel, mandated under federal law, and serves in a statewide capacity as one of California's three Citizen Review Panels. At the heart of that responsibility is the charge to review the child welfare system and make recommendations for improvement. Over the past period of performance, the Prevention Early Intervention Citizen Review Panel (PEI-CRP) identified a need to establish a statewide prevention framework that can be utilized to guide a consistent approach to prevention across all California counties.

2016/2017 Recommendations

1. The PEI-CRP recommends that the core elements identified in the Child Welfare Prevention Toolkit (Framework) be widely disseminated and used to inform ongoing improvements in California's child welfare system. This includes use as a guide for program design, service delivery, evaluation of effectiveness, and funding decisions at

both the State and County levels among Child Welfare and partner agencies and providers.

2. Ultimately, to reduce the incidence of child abuse and neglect and promote child, family and community health and well-being, we recommend that a long-term, collaborative investment in effective prevention practice be implemented throughout the State of California. Building upon CDSS leadership in Continuum of Care Reform and Strategies 2.0, we suggest that OCAP add to the scope of work for the Strategies contract, training and technical assistance to counties for the implementation of the Child Welfare Prevention Toolkit.

For example, there could be an initial two-step process for implementing the Framework in two or three counties. Phase I (6 months) would serve to engage local key stakeholders in planning a strategic, implementation plan. After review by CDSS and/or the PEI-CRP committee, Phase II (12 months) would be to implement the plan with goals of demonstrating improved County stakeholder collaboration, reduce out of home placements by 10%, improve family/youth satisfaction with child welfare services by 10% and reduce average length of family involvement with child welfare services by 10%. During Phase II, approximately six months, a committee of CDSS staff and PEI CRP members will monitor the efforts and decide if and how to spread the lessons learned to other Counties through Strategies 2.0 and other partners.

To advance these recommendations, the PEI-CRP developed the **Child Welfare Prevention Toolkit**, comprised of the Child Welfare Prevention Framework and Child Welfare Prevention Resource Guide. The *Framework* consolidates core elements of child welfare prevention practice that can be consistently and uniformly utilized by State and County Child Welfare and their partner agencies and providers to guide the design, delivery and evaluation of programming and services, as well as funding decisions. The *Resource Guide* is a compendium of resources that reinforces the Prevention Framework, including specific best practice examples for each of the core elements. The Resource Guide will also contain cross-walk resources, as well as web links and publications from which users of the framework can access and benefit.

Development of the California Child Welfare Prevention Framework

The Child Welfare Prevention Framework is based on work completed within the strategic focus of the PEI-CRP. In addition to the seminal work of identifying core elements within Differential Response, the PEI-CRP expanded the core elements to incorporate insights from other prevention approaches, as cited below. When the Framework was nearing completion, it was

further aligned to the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) efforts to build a national prevention framework, led by the work of Dr. Deborah Daro, Chapin Hall.

Review, Analysis, and Crosswalk of Current Prevention Practice

Because of its commitment to uniformity in practice, the PEI-CRP studied six approaches and philosophies of prevention practice that are in current use across the country and are generally recognized to have significant positive impact on the prevention of child abuse and neglect, as well as family preservation and reunification. These approaches and philosophies include:

- California's Differential Response Framework
- Strengthening Families™ Framework
- California Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening
- CDC's Essentials for Childhood Initiative
- California Child Welfare Core Practice Model and
- New Jersey Standards for Prevention

Please see the Child Welfare Prevention Resource Guide for links and citations.

Analysis was conducted and a matrix (or cross-walk) was developed to identify key and common elements, as well as those essential elements unique to each model of practice. The PEI-CRP then identified key elements that would ideally be considered in all child welfare prevention practice, as well as possible gaps. These core elements are the basis for the Child Welfare Prevention Toolkit and are specifically laid out in the Prevention Framework.

Alignment with the National Prevention Planning Tool

The Office of Child Abuse and Neglect, Children's Bureau, together with the Walton Foundation, the South Carolina Trust, and Colorado Office of Early Childhood, is in the process of developing an innovative planning framework that blends multiple strategies together in an effort to achieve a collective impact on child welfare prevention outcomes. The work is pending publication in *Child Abuse Prevention: A Planning Framework for Action*. Daro, D., Jarpe-Ratner, E., Karter, C., Crane, K., Bellamy, J., and Seay, Kristine. (Forthcoming). Chicago: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

Dr. Deborah Daro (Senior Research Fellow at Chapin Hall, University of Chicago) has been leading the work and initially collaborated with child welfare prevention partners in Colorado and South Carolina to test the planning tool. Subsequently she was available to advise the PEI-CRP as the overlap in efforts became clear. As a part of this review and alignment, the PEI-CRP adopted the core beliefs, overarching outcomes, strategies, and foundational principles cited

below, the majority of those being consistent with the work conducted for the national framework.

Child Welfare Prevention Core Beliefs

- The ultimate goal for any community is to have safe, stable and nurturing families.
- All children and youth deserve to be safe from abuse and neglect, and to thrive in pursuit of school, job, family and community goals.
- Strategies are most effective when they engage children, families, and communities and all members of that community are valued, respected and have a voice.
- All entities that participate in prevention are more successful when they work closely together, understand each other’s roles, share information and training, and view the system as starting with prevention and early intervention, continuing through permanency and after-care.
- From a systems perspective, robust prevention practice in child welfare leads to better long-term outcomes for children and families and generates significant savings and cost avoidance in terms of both human and financial costs.

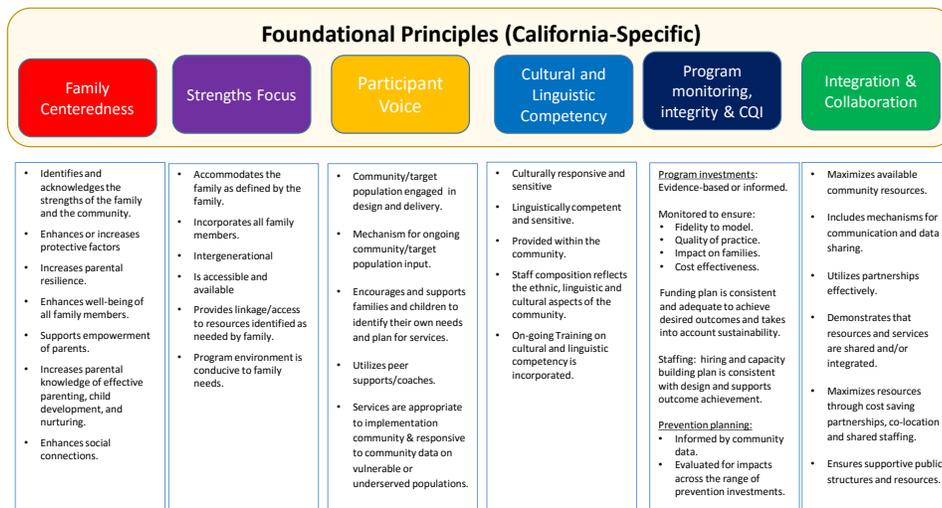
Overarching Outcomes

- Child and Caregiver Well-Being and Achievement
- Consistent High Quality Caregiving
- Safe, Supportive Neighborhoods

Strategies for Change

- Individualized services/Front line practice
- Organizational/Practice change
- Agency Collaboration/Community Capacity Building
- Policy/Funding Structural Reforms

Foundational Principles



Intended Audiences for the Child Welfare Prevention Toolkit

The Child Welfare Prevention Framework, and accompanying resource guide can be used for the following intended audiences:

- **State and Local Child Welfare Agencies and other Public Agencies** as recommendations to support the mission of ensuring child and family well-being.
- **Policymakers and State Budget Committees** as a lens through which to set priorities, evaluate, invest in and implement child and family strengthening approaches that enhances child safety, permanence and well-being.
- **Providers** as a guide to effective, high quality and evidence based practices and approaches.
- **Families/Community Members** as confirmation of California's commitment and reminder of mutual commitment to see all children raised in healthy, safe families and communities.

END NOTE

Our shared commitment is that across all California counties, programs, policies and systems work together to not only facilitate *prevention* of child abuse and neglect, but also the ongoing *promotion* of health and well-being for all children and families. Preventing child abuse and neglect, and promoting the well-being of children, families, and communities, are shared responsibilities. It is hoped that the Child Welfare Prevention Framework will serve as an effective working tool to inspire deeper and more meaningful action in keeping with the values of the Child Welfare Council, statewide standards and initiatives, and the federal standards under the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act. A multifaceted and multi-level approach is needed to achieve the over-arching outcomes described herein. To this end, the Committee has provided the California Child Welfare Prevention Toolkit to inform and support implementation of the practices we are recommending.