

CALIFORNIA CHILD WELFARE COUNCIL

Prevention and Early Intervention Committee

FEDERAL CHILD WELFARE FINANCE REFORM: A TOOLKIT FOR CALIFORNIA

Children do best in safe, stable, and permanent families, however the existing federal funding system for child welfare does not support this goal. Funding is focused primarily on children in foster care, instead of assisting families to remain safely together. The cost of this current system in California is high in terms of both human and financial capital. There were approximately 54,000 California children in foster care in 2012—13.5% of all foster children nationally- at a cost of \$3.9 billion annually. To address these issues, California has been an active participant in the discussion on federal child welfare finance reform, including participation in the Title VI Waiver Project, in order to demonstrate how reform could strengthen our ability to help families by:

- **Broadening eligibility and availability to include more families without restrictions.**
- **Increasing Flexibility to ensure services meet community and family needs.**
- **Providing Incentives and Reinvestment of Savings to keep children safely at home.**

The Prevention and Early Intervention Committee of the Child Welfare Council is confident that California can continue to have a significant voice in shaping federal child welfare finance reform through education of our community, stakeholders and the legislature. To do so, the following set of tools has been developed for use and distribution by Council members:

1. **Fact Sheet** on Federal Child Welfare Finance Reform: The fact sheet details why federal child welfare finance reform is needed; broad areas of agreement; and potential opportunities for action. Use this tool for basic education and information.
2. **California Framework** for Federal Child Welfare Finance Reform: The California Framework provides a snapshot of the current status of each finance reform area, and potential benefits for California in a reform scenario. This is an advanced tool for decision makers.
3. **Call to Action** to promote Federal Child Welfare Finance Reform: The Call to Action (brief and extended versions) suggests concrete steps that anyone can take to support California's children and families. Use this tool to consider a personal commitment to action.



JANUARY 2014