



Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting Task Force

Communities Keeping Children Safe and Families Together

KEY MESSAGING DOCUMENT

November 9, 2023

NORTH STAR

Our **North Star** is to keep children and families together, safe, well, and strengthened by the resources they need to thrive.

WE BELIEVE THAT....

All children deserve the right to grow up free from harm in their own family and thriving in their own strong communities that are well resourced.

Moving from mandated reporting to community supporting will greatly help California children grow up healthy, happy, and free from harm.

The current child welfare mandated reporting system steals hope and personal power from families, minimizing their natural ability and strength to keep their children well and safe. This is especially true for African American, American Indian, and Latino families who disproportionately experience the trauma of intrusive investigations and sometimes harmful separation.

The child welfare system must be free from racial and cultural bias. The structure of the current system results in a disproportionately negative impact on African American, American Indian, and Latino families. This must be fixed by better understanding how mandated reporting contributes to racism, and by recommending actions for change.

Families and communities are the best agents of their own change and must be respected and trusted.

Parents want to do what is best for their children and sometimes need help because they may lack the networks, supports, and services needed to bring about what they want for their children and their families.

Communities must be well-resourced to be able to provide quality services to help families stay together and keep children well and safe.



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EXTERNAL STATEMENT ON THE MANDATORY REPORTING TO COMMUNITY SUPPORTING TASK FORCE

The name of our task force describes our goal of a child welfare system that shifts from *Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting* so all of California's children are well and safe, with families together and strengthened by the resources they need to thrive.

Together with a broad and diverse set of stakeholders, many of whom have personally experienced the negative impact of the current child welfare system, the Task Force will examine the policies, practices, and public beliefs that are driving the overuse of mandated reporting. The Task Force will make statewide policy and practice recommendations to help shift from overreporting families into a system, to supporting families in their communities that are well-resourced so they can thrive.

Most families can remain safely together when they have access to resources and community support. We know this because the data shows that a majority of child maltreatment reports in California are based on general neglect and often related to poverty conditions, with 85% of those reports never being substantiated for abuse or neglect. The current overuse of mandated reporting results in traumatic experiences instead of providing the needed supports. The trauma of overreporting falls disproportionately on African American, American Indian, and Latino children and families.

In addition to reforming policy and practice, the Task Force will help develop, disseminate, and reinforce a new statewide narrative to shift from fear-based reporting to community-based supporting, and build awareness of the better outcomes for children when they are raised by parents and families, not systems.

Everyone who cares about the future of our children and families has a role to play—teachers, health care providers, police, ministers, domestic violence experts, family members, neighbors, friends and journalists. Together we can move from mandatory reporting to community supporting and keep California's children well and safe with families together and strengthened by the community resources they need to thrive.

Add a story about how you became involved and stress that everyone has a role in keeping families safely together.

The Mandatory Reporting to Community Supporting Task Force was established in March 2023 by the California Child Welfare Council and members were selected and announced in August 2023. The Task Force has 35 members from diverse backgrounds and areas of expertise. Meetings of the task force are open to the public with a schedule and materials posted on the [Child Welfare Council website](#).