



***Transforming Child Welfare: Prevention and Support—Building Sustainable
Prevention to Promote Family Well-Being in California***

CAP Webinar, April 1, 2026

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Family First
Prevention
Services

AGENDA

- Setting the Stage – Why Move to Prevention and Support?
- Transformation of Mandated Reporting
- State Systems and Funding to Promote Prevention and Family Empowerment
- Harm Reduction
- Proactive Local Support

“My daughter was born medically fragile. I had no support from my family, and I didn’t know where to go for help or even what to ask for. The domestic violence in our home got worse because of the stress of being parents of a child with significant needs. When the police called CPS, I had no idea that my child could be removed because I was a victim of domestic violence. How could they take her away? I believe my experience—and my daughter’s life—would have been different if we had support and had known about the “failure to protect” laws. Even though my daughter was in foster care for less than a year, she continues to suffer from the experience.”

— Shelley Lopez, MRCS Task Force and Lived Experience Group member, parent, and advocate

“Students learn best in safe and supportive school environments. We must re-examine our training and support for mandated reporters, as well as our policies and practices to ensure that we are centering child safety and strengthening families through prevention. We need to better understand and address over-reporting and over-surveillance, especially around general neglect, and critically examine how bias contributes to harm experienced by our historically underserved students and families.”

— Dr. Debra Duardo, Los Angeles County Superintendent of Schools

“We can do so much better, and the time is now. Maybe 20 years ago the time wasn't right, but the time is now. Communities are strong and ready to do this work. The Task Force is made up of transformers who must continue to do the work, no matter how scary. It takes all of us living in the uncomfortable zone to push.”

— Janay Eustace, President & CEO, The Child Abuse Prevention Center

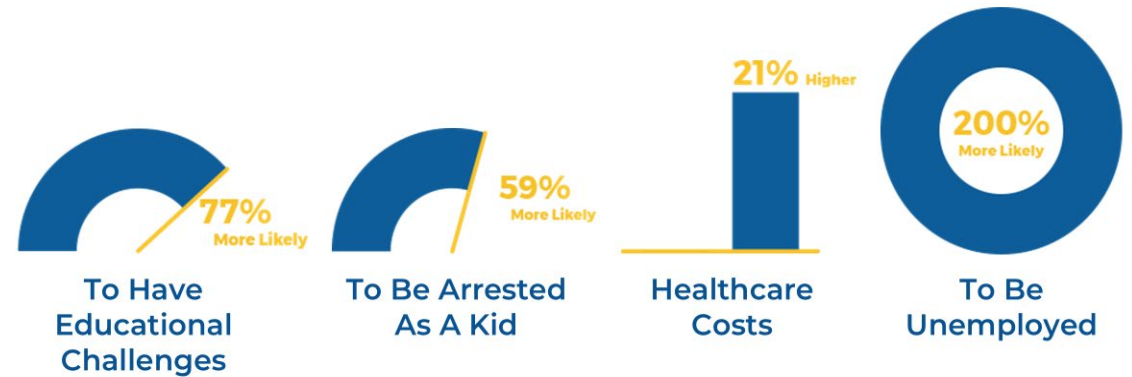


Impact of Child Abuse

PROBABILITY OF OUTCOMES



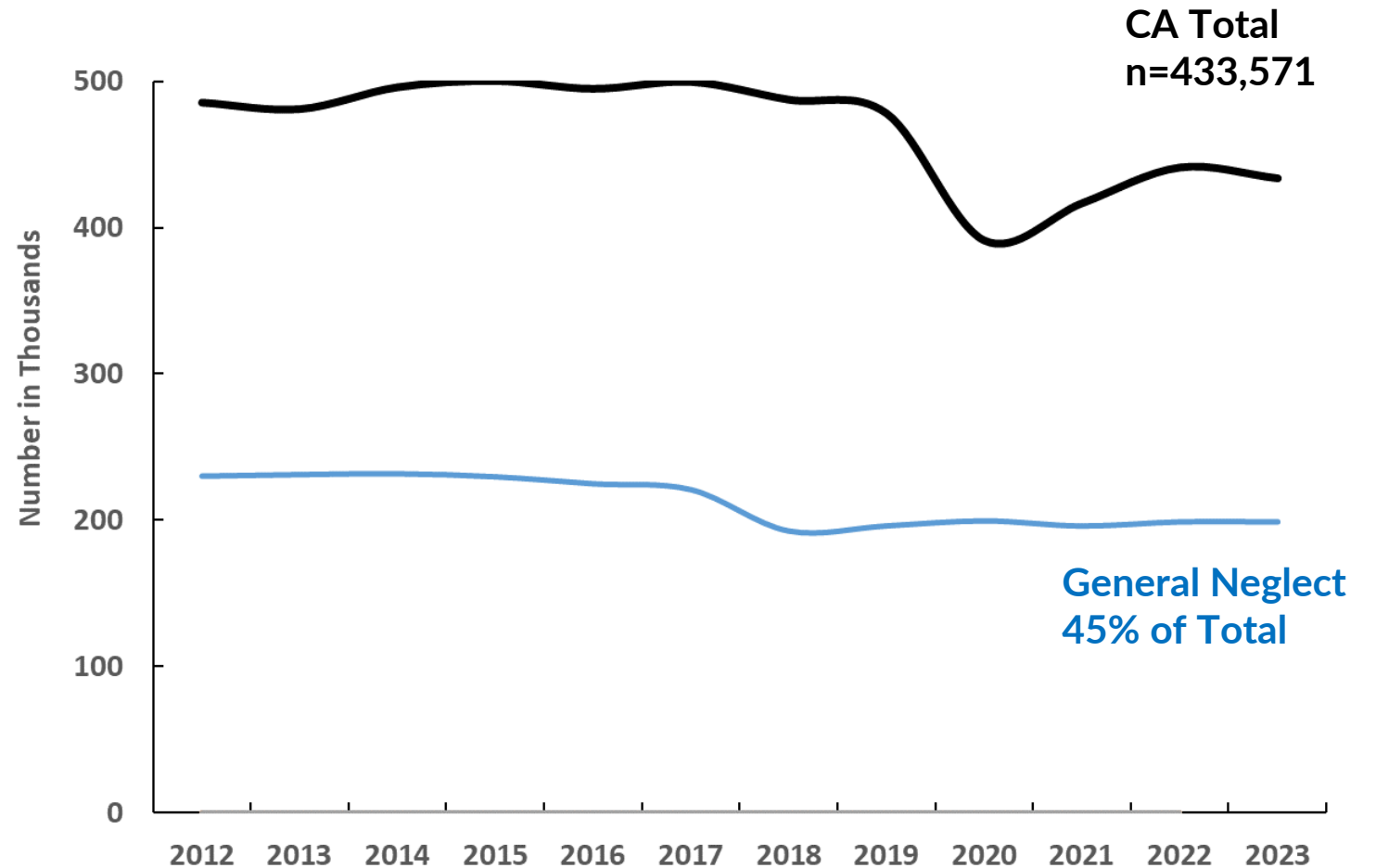
THE IMPACT ON A **CHILD** IS SEVERE & LASTS A LIFETIME



General Neglect is the #1 allegation

45% of all children with an allegation of maltreatment are related to general neglect, an occurrence that can often be mitigated by community supports. General neglect is a “catch-all” allegation that is often driven by racism, bias, and the absence of economic opportunity and resources. It can also include issues related to domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental health.

Children with an Allegation of Maltreatment



Black/African American, Native American, and Latino families are significantly more likely to be reported to child abuse hotlines



**Mandated Reporting to
Community Supporting
Task Force**

*Communities Keeping Children Safe
and Families Together*

1 in 3 Children

in the U.S. is subject to an investigation of child abuse by the time they turn 18.¹

1 in 2 Black & Native American Children

in California is subject to an investigation of child abuse by the time they turn 18.²

¹ American Journal of Public Health, 2017
² California Legislative Analyst's Office, 2024

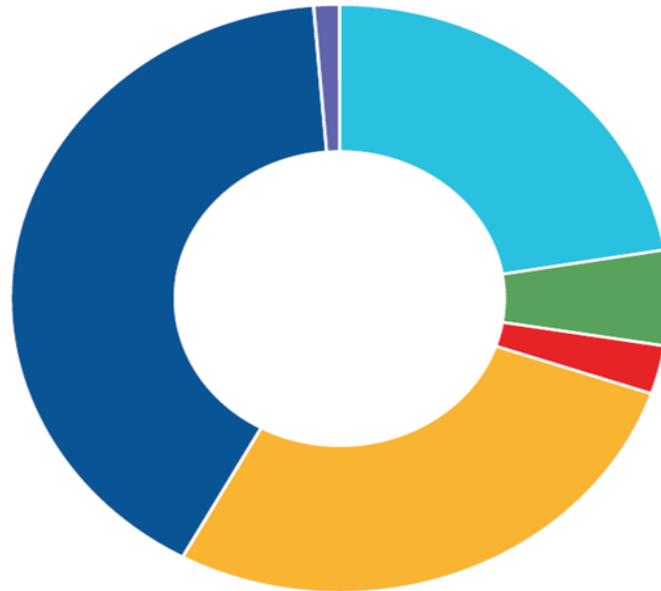
Additional Harms of Mandated Reporting

- **Fear of Asking for Support:** Families share that they often do not ask for help due to fear of how their situation will be perceived, and that they could lose their child.
- **Trauma and Stigma:** Families talk about being traumatized by child welfare investigations and stigmatized by allegations that follow them, even if the outcome of the investigation did not result in formal system involvement
- **CWS System Overburdened:** Majority of reports to the child welfare hotline do not need formal system involvement; as a result, the child welfare workforce is overburdened and unable to focus on referrals that do require formal attention

Financial Impact of Child Abuse (2024)

The Financial Impact of Child Abuse

\$16.5 BILLION



Child Welfare Costs:

\$1,297,690,459

Education Costs:

\$775,694,336

Criminal Justice Costs:

\$393,585,803

Healthcare Costs:

\$4,369,488,698

Lifetime Productivity:

\$9,567,614,171

Fatalities:

\$146,204,534

Shifting the Mindset

- Shifting the mindset from a reactive approach to a proactive approach
- From services to improving the conditions
- From preventing maltreatment to holistic wellbeing
- Equity and community engagement
- Lifting the voice of those with lived expertise



CDSS: Vision for Prevention

VISION

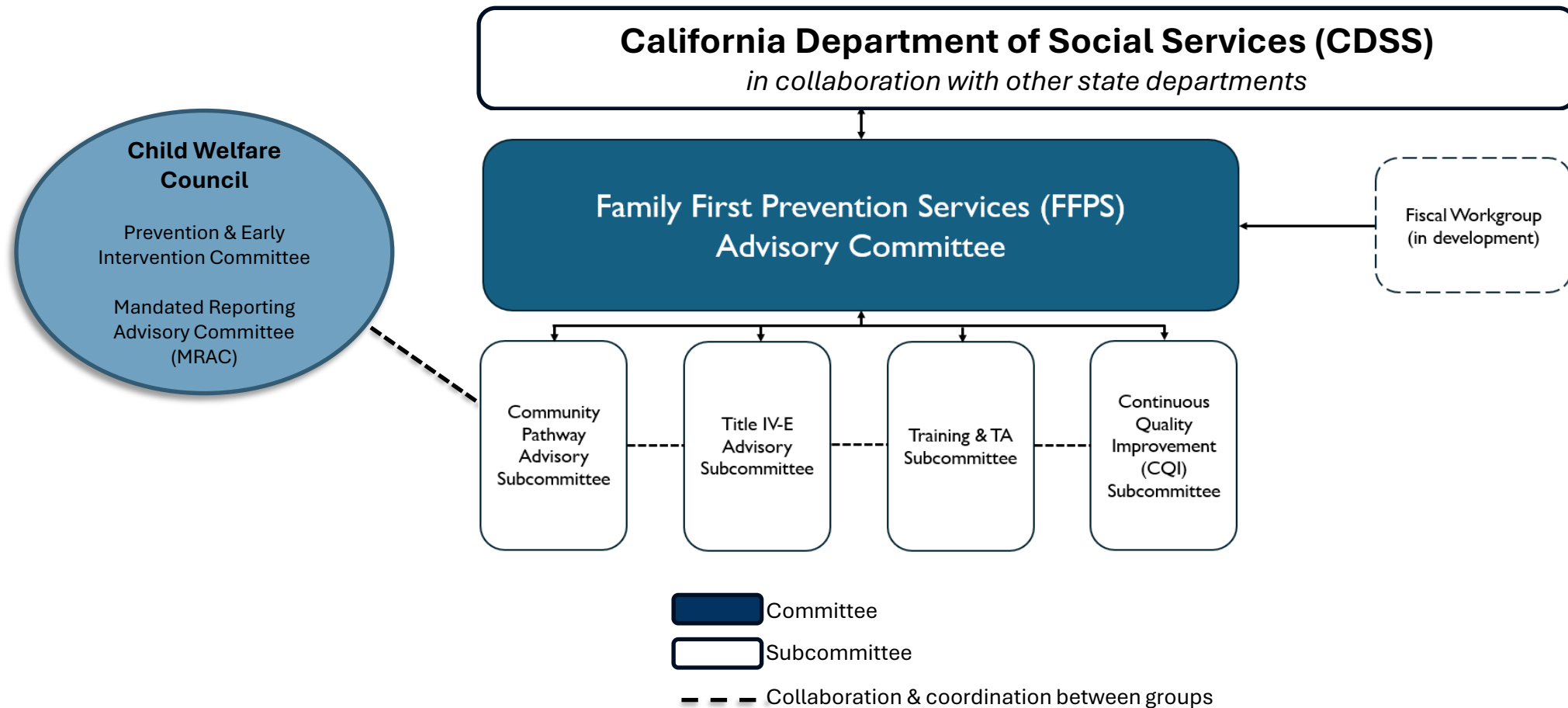
An integrated Kin-First, statewide system that supports families to provide safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for their children and youth.

Achieved by focusing on:

Tribal Engagement & Support
Racial Equity
Prevention and Family Empowerment
Harm Reduction

Trauma-Informed Caregiving
Proactive Local Support & Workforce Development
Coordination and Partnerships
Monitoring Integrity and Continuous Quality Improvement

Building a Child and Family Well-Being System



How does CDSS Achieve its Vision?

Policies & Guidance for Programs



Monitoring Funding



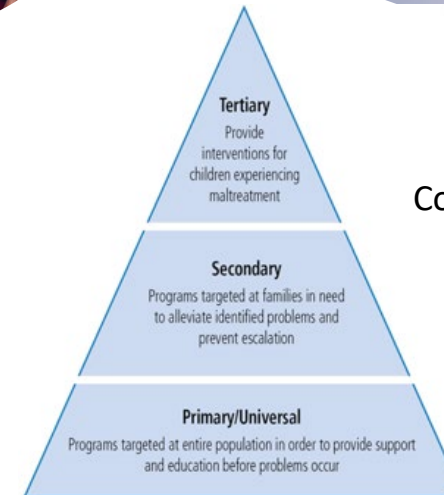
Cross-Sector Collaboration



Shared Goals



Technical Assistance Support



Continuum of Services

Shifting from Reporting to Supporting



Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee

- Established the Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC): Body responsible for guiding the implementation and oversight of the Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting (MRCs) Task Force recommendations. Committed to sustaining the MRCs transformation and working to eliminate disparities in the child welfare system. The committee was officially launched on May 20, 2025. Codified into law under the Child Welfare Council (CWC) through SB 119.
 - Workgroups formed July 17, 2025, with CDSS providing project management support.
 - Tri-chair leadership and 36-member committee are advancing implementation across five levers of change:
 - Data
 - Policy
 - Training
 - Community Pathways
 - Narrative Shift

SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS MADE

- **Narrative Shift (Recommendation 14)**
 - 25+ presentations statewide
 - National CWLA and BUILD Conference proposals
 - Presenting at statewide conferences: CWDA and Beyond the Bench
 - Support from Rally Communications secured by Casey Family Programs
- **Workgroups** have met numerous times since June to develop comprehensive implementation plans for all recommendations for consideration by the Child Welfare Council, of which CDSS is a member.
- **First bi-annual report** completed December 2025.



A BIG WIN: ADVANCED IN LEGISLATION



SB 119, signed into law in July 2025

- MRAC established: It is the intent of the Legislature that the MRAC ensure the transformation of mandated reporting to community supporting continues and disparities in the child welfare system are eliminated. (Recommendation 1)
- The new statewide mandated reporter training will incorporate content identified in the Task Force recommendations. (Recommendation 9)
- When counties update their Comprehensive Prevention Plans, the update shall include information for mandated reporters regarding the resources available to support families in their communities. (Recommendation 12)

Building Statewide Prevention and Support



Overview of Prevention Initiatives

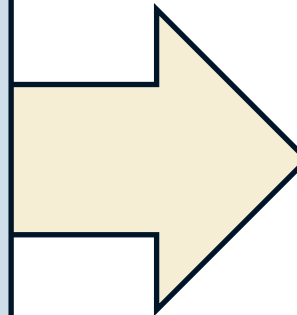
FEDERAL

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES ACT (FFPSA)

On February 9, 2018, the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 - Public Law (P.L.) 115-123 which includes the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) was signed into law.

For California, opting into FFPSA involved opting into a comprehensive prevention program.

FFPSA allowed for IV -E funding for evidence - based programs for parenting skills, mental health and substance use treatment.



STATE

FAMILY FIRST PREVENTION SERVICES (FFPS) PROGRAM

Assembly Bill 153 (Chapter 86, Statutes of 2021) implemented the FFPSA into State law and created California's opt-in FFPS Program for local Title IV-E agencies and Tribes to develop a comprehensive prevention program, including prevention services funded by Title IV-E, as outlined by federal law.

FFPS Program expanded FFPSA law to establish non-IV-E funded Community Pathway services.

Included the investment of \$222.4 million to expand beyond federal law for comprehensive prevention services.

Goal of the California FFPS Program



To provide services and supports to families with an aim to reduce trauma and address complex care needs early and effectively in a community-based setting prior to crisis occurring that may lead to any system involvement.



California's Five-year State Prevention Plan

California's Five-Year State Prevention Plan details the state's prevention strategy to include:

- Equity, Inclusion, and Disproportionality
- Candidacy/Eligibility for Services
- Pathways to Prevention Services
- Delivery of Trauma-Informed Evidence-Based Services
- Continuous Quality Improvement
- Workforce Training and Development

Prevention and Family Empowerment

Community Pathway

- FFPS Program expanded FFPSA law to establish non-IV-E funded Community Pathway services.
- A community provider develops and monitors the Family Well-Being Plan in collaboration with the family.
- Receiving community-based prevention services from a community-based provider with no child welfare involvement.
- NO interaction with the IV-E Agency other than approval of candidacy for IV-E funded prevention services.

State Block Grant

- \$224.2 Million one-time funds, over three years
- Any primary, Secondary or Tertiary Services, including concrete supports
- Allocated to FFPS Opt In Counties to support capacity building, Prevention Plan development and bridge service delivery until October 2026 implementation
- Authorized in 2022, reappropriated for additional 3 years
- Expires June 30, 2028

Comprehensive Prevention Planning

To opt-in, counties were required to develop a Comprehensive Prevention Plan (CPPs) that included:

Comprehensive Prevention Services

- This includes Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary prevention services
- Must include at least 1 FFPSA-eligible prevention service

Required & Recommended Partners

- This includes how they would include a comprehensive set of required child- and family-serving partners

- ❖ Brief Strategic Family Therapy
- ❖ Family Check-Up
- ❖ Functional Family Therapy
- ❖ Healthy Families America
- ❖ Homebuilders
- ❖ Motivational Interviewing
- ❖ Multisystemic Therapy
- ❖ Nurse Family Partnership
- ❖ Parent-Child Interaction Therapy
- ❖ Parents as Teachers

- ❖ Tribes
- ❖ Child Welfare
- ❖ Probation
- ❖ Behavioral Health Agency
- ❖ Office of Education
- ❖ Community-based providers
- ❖ Family Resource Centers
- ❖ Child Abuse Prevention Council
- ❖ Lived Experts
- ❖ Regional Centers

Supporting Family Empowerment along the Community Pathway: Funding



Name of Funding Source	Allowable Expenditures
<p>Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA)</p>	<p>Funding from CAPTA is being used by the State to fund improvements statewide in areas such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Improving risk and safety assessments and assessing families' needs for services; (2) Strengthening linkages between child welfare services, public health, mental health, and developmental disabilities agencies (3) Enhance the capacity of family resource centers and family support programs to provide services to strengthen families
<p>Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)</p>	<p>CBCAP-funded activities are those designed to strengthen and support families to prevent child abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Funds should be used to support primary prevention (a.k.a., universal) programs and strategies which are available to all families, as well as secondary (a.k.a., targeted) prevention efforts, which target children and families at risk for abuse or neglect.</p>
<p>Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF)</p>	<p>The four PSSF Program components: (1) family preservation, (2) community-based family support, (3) family reunification and (4) adoption promotion and support, are intended to provide coordinated services for children and families across the continuum from prevention to treatment through aftercare.</p>
<p>State Children's Trust Fund (SCTF)</p>	<p>Funding of large-scale dissemination of information that will promote public awareness regarding the nature and incidence of child abuse and neglect and the availability of services for intervention including but not limited to, the production of public service announcements, well-designed posters, pamphlets, booklets, videos, and other media tools.</p> <p>Currently supports: Strategies TA, Economic Empowerment, Department of General Services for Kids Plate license plates, and Public Awareness Campaigns</p>

FFPSA Implementation Process & Progress



State Prevention Program Accomplishments

**July 2020 –
December 2022**

Community Engagement,
Focus Groups, and Learning
Collaborative

September 2021

ACIN I-73-21 FFPSA Overview

March 2022

ACL 22-23: Opt-in for FFPS
Program & State Block Grant
Allocation

February 2023

ACL 23-23: Comprehensive
Prevention Plan Requirements
& Submissions

July 2023

County Comprehensive
Prevention Plans Submitted

November 2023

FFPS Advisory Committee and
Subcommittees Formalized

March 2024

Federal Approval of CA Five-
Year State Prevention Plan

December 2024

ACL 24-90: Small County
Exemption for FFPS Evidence-
based Programs

May 2025

ACL 25-12: Payer of Last
Resort Guidance for FFPS
Program

Program Resources

Evidence Based Practice Briefs

California Comprehensive Prevention Plan Map

FFPS Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan

FFPS Tier 1 Training Series

**FFPS Implementation Brief #1: Roles, Requirements
& Responsibilities**

FFPS Community Pathway Framework Brief

What's Coming Next?

Motivational Interviewing within the FFPS Program

Information will be shared regarding the training and fidelity requirements for Motivational Interviewing in order to claim for Title IV-E funding as part of the FFPS Program

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Implementation Plan

The CQI Implementation Plan will guide the specific activities that counties, Tribes, and providers will engage in to conduct ongoing CQI within the FFPS Program.

Additional Guidance

A variety of FFPS Implementation Briefs and letters are underway within the FFPS Advisory Committees to share additional guidance and resources on specific program components.

CARES Go Live

All current activities are working towards the deadline of October 2026 to establish an infrastructure for claiming federal Title IV-E dollars for prevention services.



Proactive Local Support and Workforce Development

Proactive Local Support/Supporting Workforce

Proactive Local Supports

Alignment of Continuous Quality Improvement activities and technical assistance across CWS services to include Prevention

- FFPS CQI and Implementation Plans
- Peer CQI Collaborative (PCCs)
- CDSS Technical Assistance
- Community of Practice
- Cal Prevents

Align Workforce with Prevention Goals

Analyze and adjust “front end” activities to align with Prevention goals

- Prevention mindset
- FFPS Program Training
- Mandated Reporter Training
- CQI Training



Harm Reduction, Trauma- Informed Care, Prioritizing Equity

Prioritizing Equity And Inclusion

Focus on addressing disproportionality among BIPOC, Native American, and LGBTQ+ children and youth

Adapted to the Integrated Core Practice Model to ensure authentic engagement and partnership

Ensure a Trauma-Informed Approach and incorporate cultural adaptations to eligible Evidence-Based Programs

Include a Community Pathway to provide access to services prior to the creation of a referral

Ensure application of the Indian Child Welfare Act in each service pathway

Harm Reduction

Leveraging Harm Reduction to Promote Family Preservation

Draft Definition

“Harm reduction” is a strengths based, pragmatic approach that gradually decreases the harmful impact of an unsafe behavior or situation, rather than attempting to immediately end the unsafe behavior or remove the child from the unsafe situation. Harm reduction is used when conventional interventions such as abstinence or removal may increase risk, retraumatize the youth, or undermine trust. The goals of harm reduction include, but are not limited to, enhancing youth autonomy, agency, and engagement; fostering trust and healing; reducing re-traumatization, and supporting lasting change towards increased safety and stability.

Goals:

- Build on the Harm Reduction Series developed for the state’s CSEC program and expand
- Consistent guidance across the Division and Department partners
- Focus on alignment with existing department initiatives to keep families together at home

Access FFPS Resources

California Department of Social Services



Find all of the policy and program guidance pertaining to the FFPS Program including the CA Five-Year State Prevention Plan.

California Training Institute (CalTrin)



Find resources for implementing Comprehensive Prevention Plans (CPPs) along with a list of all approved CPPs.

Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC)



Find additional resources, guidance, contacts, and more for the FFPS Program, including the Community Pathway Framework Brief and FFPS Implementation Brief shared today.

OCAP Resources

- [OCAP Funded Programs](#) – List of current grants
- [OCAP Grant/Contract Opportunities](#) – includes information on the Request for Application (RFA) process and commonly required forms
- [Funding Sources](#) – Fact Sheets for CBCAP, CAPIT, and PSSF

Stay Connected!



CalPrevents Statewide Connect

Request to Join the Conversation!

The Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) and Casey Family Programs are proud to present **CalPrevents**, an online community of practice that aims to build child, family, and community well-being.

Statewide Connect is a space on CalPrevents designed to bring together individuals and teams working on prevention efforts throughout California's Tribes and Counties.





COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?

Other comments and/or questions? Reach out to:

FFPSAPREVENTIONSERVICES@DSS.CA.GOV

Vision: Comprehensive Prevention Services

An integrated statewide system that supports families to provide safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for their children and youth.

FFPSA is one part of prevention

- Opting into FFPSA is opting into a larger comprehensive prevention-based initiative

This vision can be achieved by focusing on:

- Family Voice Centeredness
- Racial Equity
- Tribal Consultation and Collaboration
- Strength-Focused and Trauma-Informed
- Community Capacity Building
- Workforce Excellence
- Integration and Collaboration
- Monitoring Integrity and Continuous Quality Improvement

Pathways to Prevention

Title IV-E Pathway

- Traditional Voluntary and court ordered Family Maintenance Cases
- Referrals come through Child Abuse Hotline and during investigations in ER
- Offers services for children AND family members
- Oversight and Case Management by Child Welfare Agency
- Services may include non-IV-E eligible services
- Opportunity to IMPROVE upon traditional practices and success rates for these families
- Provides additional supports to families

Community Pathway

- Access in the community
- Families can self-refer, be referred by a public or private entity such as a school, healthcare provider, or local organization
- Title IV-E intake referral that did not meet the criteria for response/investigation
- Referred after an investigation to the community pathway for services
- Services are voluntary and engagement strategies such as Motivational Interviewing are used to develop rapport
- Reduction in stigma associated with CWS involvement
- Families can get help when needed

FUNDING: Difference Between FFPSA Part I and FFPS Program



- Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) Part I authorizes the use of **federal funds** to reimburse states for specified prevention programs for **children at imminent risk for entry into foster care**.



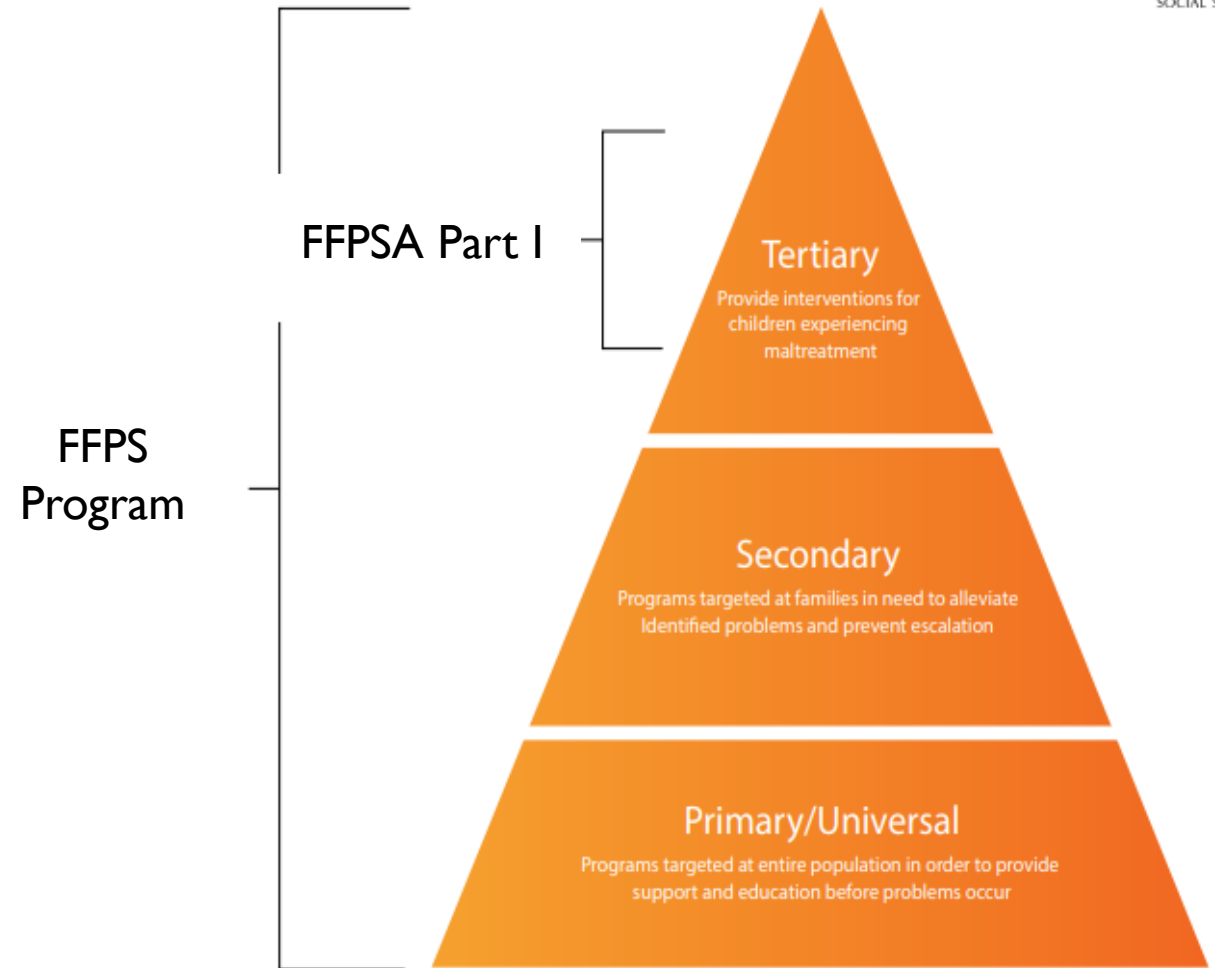
- State Family First Prevention Services (FFPS) Program Block Grant authorizes the use of **state funds** to support prevention activities **primary, secondary, and tertiary populations**.

Overview Of FFPS Program

Assembly Bill 153 established the state FFPS Program:

- FFPS Program incorporates FFPSA Part I
- FFPS Program provides the flexibility to counties to invest in prevention programs across the continuum
- FFPS Program requires counties submit a Comprehensive Prevention Plan (CPP)

FFPS Program Incorporates FFPSA Part I



State Fiscal Inventory

- Created in response to the recommendations submitted by the Prevention and Early Intervention Committee of the Child Welfare Council in September 2023.
- OCAP has surveyed multiple state departments to capture cross-sector resources.
- State Fiscal Inventory will be published on the CDSS website and CalPrevents.
- Tool will support counties in developing robust Community Pathways and leveraging resources.