

Child Abuse Prevention Month
 APRIL 2026 WEBINAR SERIES

Presented by:

STRONG FAMILIES, SAFE FUTURES
 When We Care Together, Families Thrive

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Webinar 3

Reimagining Mandated Reporting: Building Prevention-Focused Pathways for Families

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Housekeeping


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Agenda

- Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) Progress
- LA County AB2085 Implementation & Lessons Learned
- Orange County Prevention Pathways and Mandated Reporting Reform



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Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC) Progress

Juan Solis, MRAC Tri-Chair

Hillary Konrad, Bureau Chief, Office of Child Abuse Prevention



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Reimagining Mandated Reporting: Building Prevention-Focused Pathways for Families

Child Abuse Prevention Month

April 15, 2026

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"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, MDCS 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 Duarda, 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 Eustakis, President & CEO, The Child Abuse Prevention Center

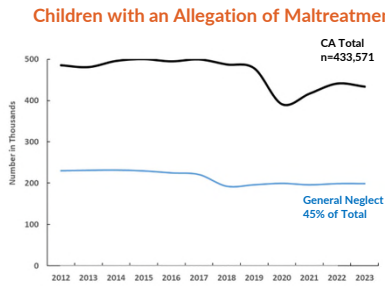


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General Neglect is the #1 allegation

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



Year	CA Total (n=433,571)	General Neglect (45% of Total)
2012	480	216
2013	480	216
2014	480	216
2015	480	216
2016	480	216
2017	480	216
2018	480	216
2019	480	216
2020	400	180
2021	430	193.5
2022	440	198
2023	440	198

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

1 in 3 Children

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

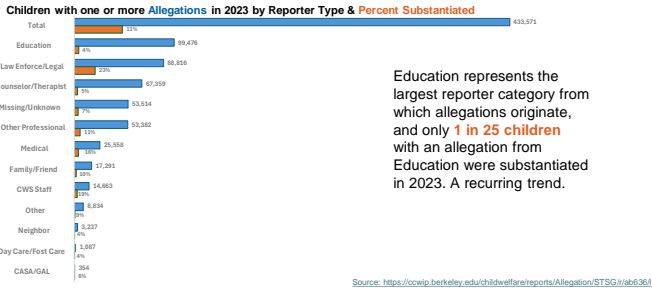
1 in 2 Black & Native American Children

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

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In 2023, only 1 in 9 children with an allegation of abuse and/or neglect was substantiated in California



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Additional Harms of Mandated Reporting

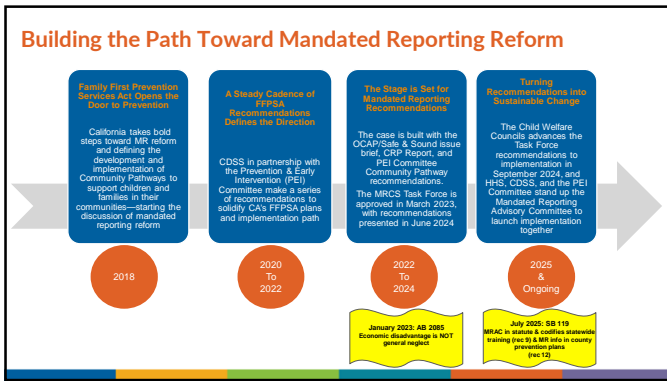
- **Fear of Asking for Support:** Families share that they often do not ask for help due to fear of how their situation will be perceived, and that they could lose their child.
- **Trauma and Stigma:** Families talk about being traumatized by child welfare investigations and stigmatized by allegations 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

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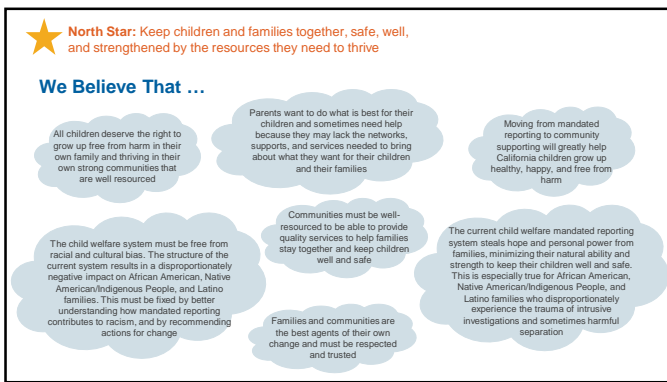
The Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting Task Force: Building a Path Toward Transformation



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Task Force and Subcommittee Composition

<p>The Task Force was comprised of 32 diverse members across 7 sectors and 11 counties</p> <p>Lived Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 88% worked in or had personal experience with the child welfare system. 28% had lived experience with child protective services as a youth or parent/caregiver. <p>Mandated Reporter Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 59% were Mandated Reporters. 94% worked in or had personal experience with Mandated Reporting laws and/or practices. 	<p>Six subcommittees that included 32 Task Force members and 68 cross-sector Subcommittee members across 24 counties</p> <p>Lived Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 79% worked in or had personal experience with the child welfare system. 25% had lived experience with the child welfare system as a youth or parent/caregiver. <p>Mandated Reporter Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63% were Mandated Reporters. 81% worked in or had personal experience with Mandated Reporting laws and/or practices.
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*Note: percentages add up to more than 100% as some members may fall into multiple categories

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The Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC)
~
Recommendations and Implementation



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Standing Up The MRAC
36 TOTAL MEMBER SEATS + TRI-CHAIRS


21 Community, Organization, and Provider Seats – Invited applicants from Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting Task Force and Subcommittee members

+

9 CalHHS Department Seats – Identify and invite candidates from each selected Department (one person per seat)

+

6 State Association Seats – Identify and invite candidates from each selected Association (one person per seat unless noted)



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<p>Key Levers of Implementation: The Recommendations are each connected to a key lever of change to focus the implementation strategy</p> <p>Shared Framework: To organize development of the implementation plan, the MRAC established a shared framework that articulates the deliverables for each recommendation, guides the identification of key activities, and highlights productive intersections across Workgroups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data and Accountability • Policy • Training • Connecting to a Community Pathway of Supports and Services • Narrative Shift
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Key Levers of Implementation

DATA & ACCOUNTABILITY

Focus and sustain action to ensure the efforts of mandated reporting reform are carried out with fidelity and accountability

DATA & ACCOUNTABILITY	DELIVERABLES
Rec 1 — Establish MRAC; track data to monitor and support progress	Semi-annual report to CWC on progress
Rec 2 — Recommend and apply data sets to advance MR reform	Ongoing analysis of impacts of recommendations Recommendations for future data tools/processes for mandated reporting
Rec 3 — Use data to track implementation and success of AB 2085 (shared with Training)	Oversight of implementation data
Rec 13 — Continue to advance MR reform through ongoing data analysis	Annual publication of disparities and impact data with CDSIS Data submissions to support Community Pathways capacity assessment

TRAINING

Leverage training as a tool to begin shifting the conversation from reporting families to supporting families

TRAINING	DELIVERABLES
Rec 3 — Use data to track AB 2085 implementation (shared with Data & Accountability)	Oversight of the AB 2085 training (CDSIS lead)
Rec 8 — Require standardized mandated reporter training	Recommendations for CANRA amendments tied to standardized training
Rec 9 — Develop statewide "gold standard" curriculum with lived expertise	Curriculum oversight to ensure alignment with core content and lived expertise
Rec 10 — Develop a statewide mandated reporter webpage	Training approval standards and certification processes Development and ongoing monitoring of statewide MR webpage

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Key Levers of Implementation

COMMUNITY PATHWAYS

Help ensure mandated reporters understand the resources available to support families and the mechanisms for making connections to supports instead of reporting

COMMUNITY PATHWAYS	DELIVERABLES
Rec 11 — CDSIS to assess capacity of community supports/services for MR and OCAP funding alignment	Review of CQI Outcomes Develop Recommendations from CQI findings (in partnership with CP Advisory Committee)
Rec 12 — CPPs must include MR-specific information on community pathways	Align OCAP funding (ensure funding is accessible to CBOs and linked to prevention needs) Define "information and education" for CPP amendments; develop statewide templates Monitor implementation of amendments through CDSIS + CP Advisory Committee Support counties in building MR-focused websites and warm handoff practices

POLICY

Enact laws and regulations that address the over-reporting in the current system, with a focus on the burden on Black/African American and Native American communities

POLICY	DELIVERABLES
Rec 4 — Support LAD analysis of narrowing MR categories	Collaboration with LAD to analyze MR categories and child safety impacts
Rec 5 — Amend CANRA to eliminate General Neglect as a reporting requirement	Research on national MR category reforms
Rec 6 — Update CANRA definition of Severe Neglect to align with SDM	Recommendations for legislation removing General Neglect from MR requirements Recommendations for clarifying Severe Neglect definition
Rec 7 — Implement 2-year liability immunity pilot using decision-making tools	Liability pilot design, tools, evaluation framework

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Key Levers of Implementation

NARRATIVE SHIFT

Increase awareness and understanding of the need for mandated reporting reform; as well as the individual, family, and societal benefits of safely narrowing the front door to CPS

NARRATIVE SHIFT	DELIVERABLES
Rec 14 — Create a statewide narrative change initiative to shift beliefs and values from mandated reporting to community supporting	Establish campaign objectives and communications plan Develop and implement statewide Narrative Shift Campaign Co-develop messaging with lived experts and community stakeholders Build qualitative data library (case studies, lived expertise stories) Merge dissemination and NS Workgroup efforts

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Leveraging the Natural Intersections

While advancing implementation of all recommendations

WHAT: AB2085: Seeing clear intersections across recommendations, the MRAC is pinpointing where an integrated approach will move the work forward faster and more effectively.

WHY: Almost three years following the implementation of AB 2085, awareness and adherence to the law are extremely low across the state.

HOW: With a coordinated implementation effort that strategically applies the implementation levers of change the MRAC will harness our collective impact efforts to significantly increase awareness, help strengthen practice consistency, and ensure the law achieves its intended impact of reducing unnecessary reporting and advancing equity statewide.



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A BIG WIN: ADVANCED IN LEGISLATION



SB 119, signed into law in July 2025

- The California Child Welfare Council shall establish a Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee (MRAC). 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)



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IMPLEMENTED

Recommendation 1

- Tri-Chairs selected and leading the work
- 36-member MRAC established – former Task Force members, CalHHS, and Statewide Associations
- Ongoing commitment to lived expertise, diverse membership at all levels, and proximity to mandated reporting



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SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS MADE

- **Narrative Shift (Recommendation 14)**
 - Ongoing statewide and national presentations including CWDA, Beyond the Bench, Partnership for Well-Being, BUILD, CWLA and others
 - Support from Rally Communications secured by Casey Family Programs
- **Workgroups** developed implementation plans and are advancing recommendations in partnership with entities across the prevention ecosystem and based on the key levers of change:
 - Data & Accountability
 - Policy
 - Training
 - Connecting to Community Pathways
 - Narrative Shift
- **The first semi-annual report** was presented to the Child Welfare Council in December 2025



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How You Can Join The Work Now




Explore and Share Mandated Reporting Reform:

- Read and share the Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting Task Force final report and recommendations.
- Attend the quarterly Child Welfare Council meetings for MRAC progress presentations.
- Read the MRAC Semi-Annual Report to the Child Welfare Council (most recent is December 2025).
- Attend the monthly MRAC meetings which are open to the public virtually.
- Ask for MRAC members to come and present in spaces to share the great work and progress being made to shift the paradigm.
- Keep the discussion going on the [Community Pathway and Mandated Reporting Reform](#) on CalPrevents 

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**Los Angeles County
AB2085 Implementation &
Lessons Learned**

Alicia Garoupa
Chief of Well-Being and Support Services, LACOE,
Tri-Chair, Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee





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Strengthening Home to School Connections and Keeping Kids Safe: Tools, Resources, and Early Learnings from LA County's Mandated Supporting Initiative




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Alicia Garoupa
 Chief of Wellbeing and Support Services, LACOE
 Tri-Chair, California's Mandated Reporting Advisory Committee



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Objectives

Build Awareness


- Establish alignment of mandated reporting reform with key priorities in education
- Develop shared understanding of **Assembly Bill 2085 (AB 2085) – the law** that revised the definition of general neglect, while codifying the important distinction between neglect and poverty-related challenges.
- Build foundational awareness for the rationale of this legislative change and broader vision of reform.

Foster Engagement

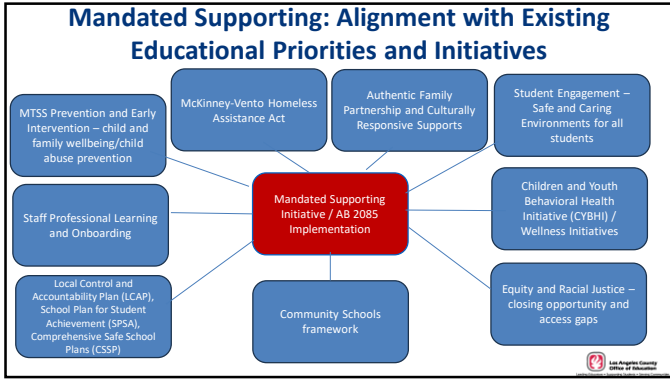
- Describe the tools and training developed in Los Angeles County to equip mandated reporters in education to make more accurate decisions in reporting child abuse and neglect, as well as how strategically to implement AB 2085 training and support within districts and schools.
- Share early learnings from these efforts

Inspire Action

- Inspire leaders in education (and other sectors) to implement reform as transformational and strategic to meet the needs of all students and their families.



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Who we are

2025-28 Strategic Plan Framework

Total K-12 Enrollment: 1.2 Million Students

55.2%	Hispanic or Latino
12.2%	White
8.2%	Asian
5.7%	African American/Black
3.3%	Two or more races
2.1%	Pacific
0.2%	Pacific Islander
0.2%	American Indian or Alaska Native

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Our Educational Community

80 K-12 School Districts

Largest: LAUSD = 516,685 Students | Smallest: Hughes-Elizabeth Lakes Union Elementary = 195 Students

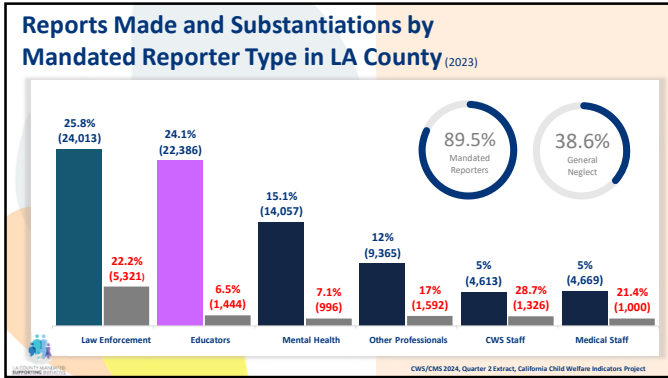
48 Unified	26 Elementary	5 High School
1,787 Schools	358 Charters	62,342 Teachers
		71,116 Classified Staff

LACOE Employees: 1,570

51%	3%	12%	34%
Unrepresented	CSDE	LACOE	SEU

ELEMENTARY, HIGH SCHOOL, AND UNIFIED DISTRICTS LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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**“There’s so much smoke,
my people can’t see the fire.”**

Brandon T. Nichols
Director, Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services

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Overreporting

- 17% of educator respondents to our survey answered that they made a report without concerns about potential child abuse or neglect

Why?

- Confusion due to poor/inadequate training
- Fear of liability
- Desire to help children and families
- Bias

“As mandated reporters, we are basically incentivized to report, report, report.”

Listening Sessions
Castillo Consulting Partners (2023). Bear, L. (2023)

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Inadequate Training and Guidance for Sound Decision Making

- What do we remember from our mandated reporter training?
- What is reasonable suspicion?
- Does current training provide adequate, concrete guidance to support effective decision making?
- Fear-based; prioritizes organizational risk aversion



Multiple Extraneous Factors Influencing Reporting Decisions

- Bias, as traditionally conceptualized (e.g., race, class)
- Additional cognitive biases (e.g., personal experiences with maltreatment, perception of DCFS, type and severity of suspected maltreatment)
- Fear of personal and organizational liability
- Conditioning to overreport/underreport




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Are we missing opportunities to PREVENT child maltreatment, PARTNER WITH AND STRENGTHEN families and IMPROVE child safety?

- What do we remember from our mandated reporter training?
- What is reasonable suspicion?
- Does current training provide adequate, concrete guidance to support effective decision making?
- Fear-based; prioritizes organizational risk aversion

Many mandated reporters shared that they make reports to DCFS just to get help for families in need

- 65% of LA County mandated reporters who made reports without suspecting child abuse or neglect indicated that "Making a report was the best way to connect a family to needed services"




Evidence Change, 2023

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Now that We Understand the Problem, What Are Tools to Address it?






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Assembly Bill (AB) 2085




1. Child's parent/caregiver negligently failed to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision

2. No physical injury to the child has occurred

AND

(3) Child is at substantial risk of suffering serious physical harm or serious illness

(4) Parent's economic disadvantage is NOT general neglect




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Legislative Intent: Assembly Bill (AB) 2085

Legislative intent is to:

- Eliminate overreporting due to bias based on race and class
- Rectify conflation of poverty with general neglect
- Address racial disproportionality
- Decrease the strain on the child welfare system

Is not only the law, but presents tremendous opportunity to further whole family approaches in education!




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LA County Mandated Supporting Initiative (MSI)

In May 2023, the LA County Board of Supervisors passed the "Moving from Mandated Reporting to Mandated Supporting" motion, directing reform

Broad coalition of partners working to transform to a model which:

- prevents child harm and promotes family well-being
- provides high-quality supportive services to families in need to prevent maltreatment
- eliminates mandatory reporting as a driver of racial disproportionality



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AB 2085 Mandated Supporting Initiative Aligned Efforts	
	Aligned Assets/Approach in Education Sector
Narrative Shift	Messaging campaign and social media content/tools for educational partners and staff LACOE Child Abuse Prevention month resources Educator's summit – on-going outreach/communications
Data	Tracking calls from education; evaluated out vs. investigated; substantiation rates; regional trends
Training	3 paths to complete county-developed training – Individuals; organizations asynchronous training and live facilitation to support implementation; education specific module Training & Tools include 5 step decision support process and general neglect decision tree
Community Pathways	Strengthening knowledge/visibility of supports for families; positioning that support as a part of prevention and response to change in the law that narrows what should be called in to CPS Family Resource Finder and BrightLife Kids Parent Support
Policy	Integrating this legal change into policy and practice; implementation (<i>In Progress</i>) Child Abuse Prevention month board resolution

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A Toolkit for Action

- District Readiness Checklist**: Helps your district team identify a plan to implement AB 2085 and its assorted tools.
- AB 2085 Training Supplement and Mandated Reporters in Education Module**: E-learning to train staff on AB 2085 statutory requirements and tools to support reporters and families.
- AB 2085 Decision-Support Process Overview**: 5-step decision-support guide designed as a desk reference for reporters to help them fulfill AB 2085 responsibilities and easily connect families to supports.
- AB 2085 General Neglect Decision Support Tool for Mandated Reporters**: 4-question decision support tool to provide reporters with guidance on making a reporting decision based on AB 2085 requirements.
- Supporting Families Website with Family Resource Finder**: "One stop shop" for reporters and families to easily find services and supports in their neighborhoods.
- LACOE.edu Website**: Designed to raise awareness and connect LEA leaders and mandated reporters in education with relevant supports, materials, and resources.
- Technical Assistance and Support**: Based on capacity and need, technical assistance and support may be provided to interested sites to support implementation.

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AB 2085 Training Supplement E-Learning and Training Supplement Module for Mandated Reporters in Education

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AB 2085 Decision-Support Process Overview and AB 2085 General Neglect Decision Support Tree

Five-step decision support process

1. Clarify
2. Consider
3. Consult
4. Complete
5. Decide

General Neglect Decision Tree

- “Low Tech”
- Recommendations:
 1. Make a report to DCFS
 2. Consult with DCFS
 3. Link the family to supportive services if they are in need

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AB 2085 Asynchronous Training Participant Data (as of 12.31.25)

Total Live Training Attendees (STAR Seminar/Launch on 11.29.23)	727
Total E-Learning Completions (Since Initial Launch, 1.19.24 - 12.31.25)	2,502 +1,552 LACOE employees (4,054)
---Educator Specific---	
Total E-Learning Completions by Educators (Since Initial Launch, 1.19.24 - 12.31.25)	1,370 +1,552 LACOE employees
Total E-Learning Completions by Educators (Since Launch of Educator Module, 10.22.24 - 12.31.25)	1,310
Total LA County Districts Represented Among E-Learning Completions (1.19.24- 12.31.25)	24
Total Unique Views of Educator Slide Deck/Facilitator Guide (Since Launch of Educator Module, 10.22.24)	612

*Estimated number of LA County employees in the education sector (24-25 from DataQuest) = 161,000
certificated employees=90,000+ classified employees=71,000+*

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Impact of AB 2085 Asynchronous Training

E-Learning - Educators (N=1,193) (1.19.24 - 12.31.25)			Change
	Percent/Average BEFORE Training/Course (N = 1193)	Percent/Average AFTER Training/Course (N = 1193)	
I have skills/knowledge necessary to serve my clients well	58.9%	91.9%	+32.6%
Mean (scale of 1-5; 5 is 'Strongly Agree')	3.8	4.4	
I have the training necessary to find effective solutions for the people I serve	61.4%	90.4%	+28.9%
Mean (scale of 1-5; 5 is 'Strongly Agree')	3.7	4.3	
I am confident in my capacity to help the people I serve	66.8%	90.8%	+24.0%
Mean (scale of 1-5; 5 is 'Strongly Agree')	3.8	4.3	
I am confident in my ability to implement today's training topic in my work	60.9%	89.9%	+29.0%
Mean (scale of 1-5; 5 is 'Strongly Agree')	3.7	4.3	
I think that other staff should get this training/course.	(N = 1193)		
Percentage Agreed	87.1%		
Mean (scale of 1-5; 5 is 'Strongly Agree')	4.3		
Overall, how would you rate this training/course?	(N = 1193)		
Percentage Good, Very Good, or Excellent	95.3%		
Mean (scale of 1-5; 5 is 'Excellent')	4.0		

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Key Themes and Feedback from Participants

AB 2085 Training Feedback - Educator Summary with Illustrative Quotes
Source: 69 free-response comments from educators who took the training (submitted between 2.16.25 - 12.31.25)

Key Theme	What Educators Liked	Suggestions for Improvement	Illustrative Quote
1. Scenario-Based Learning & Case Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> M's circumstance scenarios helped understand decision-making Case studies showed when to file reports Scenarios tested comprehension effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More video enactments vs. reading scenarios Additional examples of different situations More practice scenarios 	"The M's circumstance played out in two different scenarios allows you to see yourself as the mandated reporter and it allows you to step back to not make a biased decision when deciding whether to report or not."
2. Decision Tree & Visual Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision-making visual tree was mapped out clearly Step-by-step guidance was easy to follow Visual resources were new and helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More graphs and visual elements Provide a checklist for common abuse situations Written guide for post-training reference 	"I liked the visual of the Decision making visual tree. For me seeing this in writing mapped out really makes sense and will definitely help me if I should come across a situation that may need reporting."
3. Clear Format & Accessible Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training broken into manageable sections Videos came with transcripts Online format was easy to navigate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorten videos, training exceeded 1 hour Separate downloads from video content Make content more visually appealing 	"I liked this training because it was broken into sections that made it easier to get through the material."
4. Bias Awareness & Critical Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training emphasized self-awareness of biases Clarified steps before making inaccurate reports Reminder that critical thinking is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define key terms more clearly More emphasis on clarifying questions Additional examples showing diverse situations 	"How it lets us know that we all have bias and how to take time to really think and ask the questions to help us understand how to proceed."
5. Practical Resources & Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downloadable PDFs and resources provided Information applicable to student situations Comprehensive coverage of AB 2085 requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate into existing mandated reporter training Provide dedicated work time for completion Offer in-person/live training options 	"I agree STRONGLY with the observation that we need consistent statewide mandated reporter professional development. Rather than being a 'stand alone' this training should be incorporated in the regular mandated reporter training."

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Impact of Training – Live Training Results

- ✓ Live training was most impactful at changing participant's understanding of acceptability of asking clarifying questions.
 - Pre-training, 42.6% of the participants agreed that it was okay to ask questions about a concerning situation.
 - Post training, that number went up to 89.5%.
- ✓ Participants' ability to correctly identify the definition of general neglect increased by 22.5% from 72.2% to 94.7%
- ✓ Participants self-reported ability to tell the difference between a family in need and general neglect increased by 16.5% from 70.4% pre-training to 86.9% post-training.

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Promoting the Family Resource Finder SupportingFamilies.lacounty.gov



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Calls to the Child Protection Hotline from Mandated Reporters in Education – LA County

Year	Total	# Involving General Neglect	% of Calls that included General Neglect allegation
2023	14,549	6,881	47%
2024	12,562	6,073	48%
2025	10,454	5,100	49%



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Lessons Learned Brief

Overview: The Foundation for Transformation

Changing Practice

Finding 1: Staff need a clear path to pause and consult

Finding 2: Training must be integrated in practice and systems

Shifting Systems

Finding 3: Leadership sets the conditions for change


Finding 4: Supporting instead of reporting families required tangible resources

Finding 5: Data is essential to the feedback loop of change

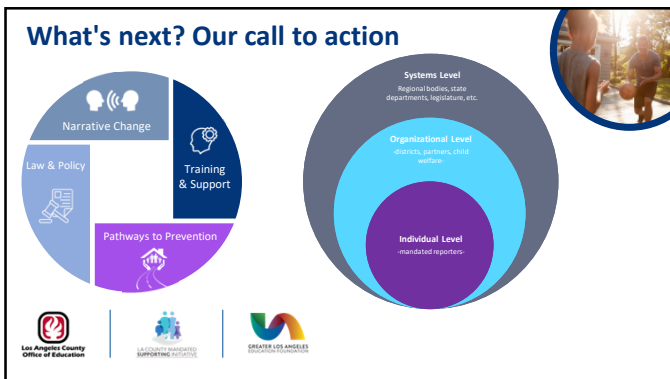
Sustaining Change

Finding 6: Stable staffing and funding is essential

Finding 7: Embed changes in policy and practice at every level of the system



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Stay Connected!

Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE)
Alicia Garoupa, LCSW
garoupa_alicia@lacoed.edu

Los Angeles County Mandated Supporting Initiative
Dr. Tamara N. Hunter
msi@dcs.lacounty.gov

Visit: SupportingFamilies.LAcounty.gov
& lacoed.edu/mandatedsupporting

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**Orange County Prevention Pathways
& Mandated Reporting Reform**

Nicole Stratman, Family Maintenance
Collaborative Services/FaCT

Judith Stanlow, Families and
Communities Together (FaCT)

Camille Delgadillo, Human Services
Manager



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**Orange County's
Community Pathway**

Nicole Stratman
Family Maintenance Collaborative Services/FaCT



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Families First Unit and Healthy Tomorrows

- Healthy Tomorrows is one of four prevention-based components in the Families First Unit
- The Families First Unit also provides services to families referred through the School Attendance Review Board (SARB), Truancy Court, and the Multi-Disciplinary Consultation Team (MDCT)
- The main objective of these programs is to address family issues that may result in contact with the child welfare system without intervention

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Healthy Tomorrows

- In existence since 1992
- Collaboration with 10 Community Elementary Schools in the Santa Ana Unified School District
- Social Workers are co-located at the schools
- Goals include:
 - Early intervention and service delivery to children at risk of school failure due to health and social issues
 - Provide school-linked child abuse prevention services to at-risk families
 - Empower parents and caregivers through education and resources

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How are Families Identified?

Students and families are referred through School Counselors, Administrators and Family & Community Engagement (FACE) Liaisons

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Healthy Tomorrows Services and Supports

- Provide psycho-education to families and children
- Referrals and linkages to Community-Based Organizations for services and supports
- Case Management Services
 - Provided by a Senior Social Worker in the Families First Unit
 - Ideal timeframe is 3-6 months, can be longer depending on need
 - Meet with the family in-person once a month, in home or community location
 - Complete a Family Wellness Plan
 - Based on the 5 Protective Factors
 - Use the Protective Factors Survey (pre and post) to assess family needs and progress

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Neighbor to Neighbor Program

(Differential Response Path 1)

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Neighbor to Neighbor and the FaCT Program

- Families and Communities Together (FaCT) is a public-private partnership within the County of Orange. The Social Services Agency partners with community agencies to provide essential family support services at 15 Family Resource Centers located in Orange County's highest risk communities
- The Neighbor to Neighbor program is not new in Orange County; however, providing these services with measurable outcomes through the FaCT Family Resource Centers is newly contracted as of July, 2025
- Each designated Family Resource Center has a Community Engagement Coordinator (CEC) and Family Support Advocate (FSA) dedicated to working specifically with Neighbor to Neighbor families

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Neighbor to Neighbor

- Referrals are generated from calls received by the Child Abuse Registry that do not meet the statutory definition of abuse or neglect
- Identify families that may benefit from services and supports that could prevent child abuse & neglect
- Goals of the program include the early identification of needs to prevent a crisis and promoting a family's ability to become self-sufficient
- Referrals are sent to 5 contracted FRCs for service provision, the family's participation is voluntary



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Referral Process

Child Abuse Registry Social Workers assess and refer families to the Family Resource Center

The Community Engagement Coordinator will reach out to the family within 24 hours of receiving the referral and make multiple subsequent attempts. Once the family is engaged, the Family Support Advocate will meet with them and together assess and prioritize the family's needs.

Services offered may include:

- Case Management
- Domestic Abuse Services
- Parent Education and Support
- Individual or Family Counseling
- Basic Needs / Emergency Assistance
- Family Engagement / Bonding Activities



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Engagement is Key

- The Community Engagement Coordinator looks for strategic supports and services to offer based on the family's unique needs
- Families are contacted in a variety of ways and offered incentives such as basic needs items, family bonding activities and family fun events
- Focus of engagement is on services and supports available, not specific agency concerns
- Once engaged and connected with the Family Support Advocate, families will receive case management services and linkages to community resources and supports

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Bumps in the Road

- **Challenges to Engagement:**
 - Distrust or suspicion of motives for contact
 - Inability of staff to share how they obtained the family's contact information; the referral source is confidential
 - Lack of response from family despite multiple attempts
- **Challenges to Service Participation:**
 - Cases have complex needs, families may be overwhelmed
 - Lack of follow through with services and appointments; stop responding to staff
 - Families who do not need financial or basic needs assistance may be more reluctant to participate in services



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Lessons Learned: Turning Challenges into Success

- Use of creative engagement strategies, thinking "outside the box"
- Offering incentives that are not just financial supports
- Strengthening connections with community resources of which families were previously unaware
- Connecting families to other FRCs if they are more convenient to the family
- Most families who engage and meet with the Family Support Advocate are receptive to service participation
- Some families return months after initial contact attempts were made, indicating they are now ready to seek support
- Services are being offered to families who previously would not have received these prevention efforts



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Judith Stanlow, MA
 Program Administrative Consultant, Families and Communities Together (FACT), Children and Family Services
 714-715-6530
 judith.stanlow@ssa.ocgov.com

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Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting (MRCS)
 Camille Delgadillo
 Human Services Manager

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MRCS
 A state-wide initiative to shift the focus of mandated reporter responsibilities from primarily reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to actively supporting families within their communities.

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WE CAN Coalition

- The Working to End Child Abuse and Neglect (WE CAN) Coalition is a county-wide collaboration
- Addresses the intersecting needs of children, families and communities
- Consists of more than 100 different organizations, programs, and departments
- Working together to serve target populations in a comprehensive manner
- Focuses on prevention, diagnosis and treatment
- Comprised of four (4) Task Forces:
 - Family Support
 - Training and Education
 - OC SCAN Team
 - Prevention

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MRCS Initiative in OC

- MRCS Initiative is a newly formed collaborative
- The MRCS Initiative will be the new focus of the existing Coalition Prevention Task Force
- The Prevention Task Force will evolve into the MRCS Task Force

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Where are we now?

- The WE CAN Prevention Task Force core team presented the idea of tackling the MRCS initiative to the Task Force's membership last November 2025.
- Early discussions revolved around the new MRCS Task Force's mission as "a collaborative effort to strengthen our community's response and support systems."
- The new MRCS Task Force is at the early stages of its evolution.
 - Planning sessions are being held to:
 - Discuss Task Force leadership
 - Create a list of potential "voices at the table"
 - Define our shared mission and vision
 - The WE CAN Prevention Task Force/MRCS Initiative kick off is on May 13, 2026.

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Who is on the MRCS Task Force?

- 🔥 Planning Team
 - 🔥 Co-leads are Paul Bonfanti and Kristen Stits
- 🔥 Task Force Membership
 - WE CAN Prevention Task Force members were asked to share the contact information of stakeholders with diverse perspectives and lend their voice at the table.
 - Sub-committees may be formed to work on the various implementation tasks.




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MRCS Task Force Implementation Plan

- 🔥 Implementation planning will include:
 - Reviewing the existing work of other counties
 - Referral and information gathering
 - Education/Curriculum Tool development
 - i.e. decision tree, pathway, etc.
 - Roll Out
 - TBD

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Anticipated concerns:



Proposed solutions:

- 🔥 Task Force to brainstorm and implement solutions
- 🔥 Continuing education
- 🔥 Community Pathway buildout

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Camille Delgadillo
 Human Services Manager, Children and Family Services
 714-746-5768
 Camille.Delgadillo@ssa.ocgov.com

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Questions?



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Thanks for joining us!

What's Next?
 Register now for the next webinar in this series!

APRIL 22
 Concrete Supports in Action: Meeting Family Needs to Prevent Crisis
 11:00 A.M. – 12:30 P.M.

SCAN HERE



STRONG FAMILIES, SAFE FUTURES
 When we care together, families thrive

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