



Family First Sacramento

Reimagining Public Systems to Support Equitable Child, Family & Community Well-being

Imagine living in a place where children and families are safe, healthy, and feel supported by their community; where they have easy access to resources and services that help them be well and thrive. Imagine living in a place where caring, competent helping professionals are available and ready to lend a hand when families need extra support – in ways that meet each individual family’s needs and feels right for them. This is what Family First Sacramento is all about: connecting families with helping professionals and resources to build a strong foundation that promotes equitable community child and family wellbeing.

All families deserve to have the resources and support they need to take care of their children and thrive. Children need their families, and families need their communities and cultures. It is important for public systems to understand and reinforce natural supports within families, communities, and diverse cultures.

QUICK FACTS

A County and State Comparison
for children/youth ages 0-17 years

CALIFORNIA STATE	SACRAMENTO COUNTY
CHILD POPULATION 8,893,756*	CHILD POPULATION 358,642*
MALTREATMENT ALLEGATIONS 440,212*	MALTREATMENT ALLEGATIONS 20,886*
IN FOSTER CARE (CHILD WELFARE) 45,144**	IN FOSTER CARE (CHILD WELFARE) 1,284**
IN FOSTER CARE (JUVENILE JUSTICE) 488**	IN FOSTER CARE (JUVENILE JUSTICE) 32**

SOURCES

*UC Berkeley CA Child Welfare Indicators Project, Calendar Year 2022

**UC Berkeley CA Child Welfare Indicators Project, January 1, 2023 (point in time)

The **Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA)**, approved by Congress and signed into law on February 9, 2018, reflects a shift in the way Title IV-E agencies (Child Welfare and Probation) can serve communities. Expanding from serving families in crisis to also supporting prevention of family separation, FFPSA provides opportunities to prevent children from entering into the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice systems by encouraging community and cross-systems collaborations that implement "trauma-informed" and "evidence-based" practices that keep families together. Most importantly, Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice agencies will be able to draw down Title IV-E funding to pay for prevention services, which has not been allowed in the past. **This means that counties will be able to invest even more in prevention services that strengthen families and promote child and family well-being.**

Our Opportunity: Sacramento County has been focused on prevention and early intervention for decades. We have improved outcomes for children and families through a number of programs and partnerships, including the Black Child Legacy Campaign, Birth and Beyond Family Resource Centers, Quality Childcare Collaborative, Nurse Family Partnership, Early Violence Intervention Begins with Education (eVIBE), Suicide Prevention, continuum of mental health and substance use services for children, youth and families, intensive voluntary services to keep children safely with their families, and so many more. We now have a new opportunity that will allow us to build on this work and strengthen our efforts to reduce the racial disparities we see in our public systems.

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County Child Welfare & Probation agencies, with unprecedented new resources and policies, are engaged in a new way of doing business – uniting with public and private partners and guided by those with lived expertise to realize a vision of child, family and community well-being.

Concurrently, the **State of California released a time-limited block grant** to support counties in the planning and implementation of programs that set Counties up for success in furthering prevention, locally. California's block grant invites counties to opt-in and develop prevention plans that support the state's vision to create "an integrated state-wide system that supports families to provide safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments for their children and youth."

In order to receive the block grant funding, each county that opts-in must create a Comprehensive Prevention Plan that is inclusive of public and private sectors, and is guided by community voice and those with lived expertise.

The state block grant and FFPSA provide Sacramento County with a unique opportunity to change how we do business and serve communities. This is our chance to establish a prevention-focused, community-based, countywide structure that focus on social drivers of child and family health and well-being to support families before they come to the attention of public systems.



Data analysis has revealed that in Sacramento County:

Children/Youth in Child Welfare System:

- Black/African American and Native American populations are disproportionately represented in the Child Welfare system. Native American children are overrepresented at two to three times their population in five of nine CPS decision points, while Black/African American children are overrepresented at two to three times their population in all nine CPS decision points. (Decision points include but aren't limited to: allegations, investigations, substantiations, opening a case, entry into out of home care, etc.)
- The largest group with CPS interaction are families with children ages zero through five.
- The top six zip codes with the highest percentage of Black/African American children (ages zero through five) involved with CPS are: 95821, 95825, 95823, 95828, 95815 and 95838 (communities of Arden Arcade, Florin/Valley Hi, and North Sacramento/Del Paso Heights).

Youth in Juvenile Justice System:

- Black/African American youth are disproportionately represented in the Juvenile Justice system.
- The top three zip codes with an overrepresentation of youth involved with the Juvenile Justice system are 95823, 95828, and 95838 (communities of Florin/Valley Hi and Del Paso Heights).
- These youth experienced a host of Adverse Childhood Experiences including emotional and physical trauma, and a history of family substance addiction and incarceration.
- Approximately 50% of youth involved with the Juvenile Justice system within the focus zip codes had also been involved in a CPS investigation when they were between the ages of zero through five and/or had an average about eight CPS investigations prior to Juvenile Justice intervention.

Given the data above, the initial focus population for the block grant will be (for Child Welfare) Black/African American families with children ages zero through five; and (for Probation) pre-adjudicated youth ages 13 through 17, and their families, going through the court process (youth who have been referred to Probation, but their court cases have not yet reached a resolution). However, services and interventions will be provided for all populations at risk of touching these public systems.

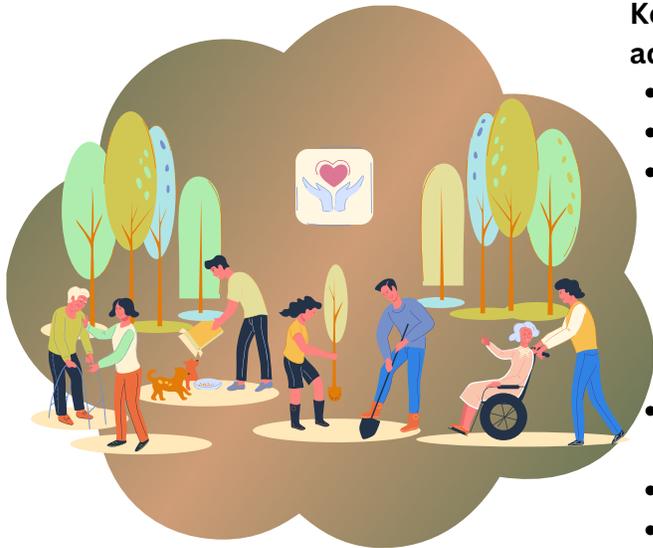
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One thing we can all agree on, we can do better for our children and families in Sacramento County.

How We Partner Together: Listening sessions with families in the highlighted zip codes will help create a stronger connection to and understanding of the community, and to provide insights to further tailor our work as identified by community members. As we co-create our roadmap, we recognize that many families in our county struggle with issues that impact equity and well-being, including housing stability, financial stability, quality education, physical and mental health, social supports, and safe neighborhoods. These areas will be prioritized to achieve our vision of equitable community child and family well-being.

Listening Session Question: The services that would make my neighborhood a better place include... "accessible and visible services that don't require technical use to get interventions to those in need." and "making equal opportunities available." - Parents/Caregivers at listening sessions



Keeping this in mind, we are reimagining strategies that include addressing some of these areas:

- Flexible funding to meet families' basic needs, when they need it
- Guaranteed Basic Income program (pilot and evaluation)
- Greater access to services which may include:
 - Mobile Wellness Units or co-location of services
 - Increase in Parent Partners/Advocates to support families
 - Culturally-supportive "warm line" for Black/African American families
 - Increasing childcare capacity and access
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion institutional analysis and coaching for child and family helping professionals
- High Fidelity Wraparound and Functional Family Therapy
- Community Intervention Team

"I see the need for childcare. A lot of families are trying to get on their feet, trying to find a job, and sometimes it's really hard because daycares are so expensive." - Parent/Caregiver at listening session

What We Hope to Achieve: We believe that investing in primary prevention is foundational to keeping families together and strengthening families and communities. Some of our key assumptions include:

- When families have access to services in their community, they are better able to provide for their children's overall well-being.
- Families of color are disproportionately affected by poverty. Providing economic and basic needs support (including childcare) is a strategy that can reduce racial disproportionality in the Child Welfare system¹ and entries/re-entries into foster care.
- Youth and their families fare better when they have equitable access to services that address their specific needs, which assists Probation-involved youth with home and community stabilization.
- With connection to services, youth and families' contact with the Juvenile Justice system will be limited and/or eliminated altogether.
- Actively addressing structural racism and implicit bias in public systems will help reduce racial disparities in those systems.

"Equity" means leveling the playing field, so people have what they need in recognition of their individual circumstances.



"Social Justice" refers to a fair and equitable division of resources, opportunities, and privileges in society.

[1] <https://www.chapinhall.org/project/a-key-connection-economic-stability-and-family-well-being/>