



Implementation has Begun on California Partners for Permanency! We are Getting Started and Getting Better!

Welcome to this edition of RECAPPP! In it we will provide you with an update on the activities going on statewide as well as those taking place at local sites as we implement the Child and Family Practice Model in four counties in California.

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Parents, youth, caregivers, communities and tribes continue to assist our local sites in implementing the Child and Family Practice Model. Their perspective and first hand experiences with the child welfare system has helped CAPP sites to better understand the importance of ensuring that all children remain connected to their families and to cultural, community and tribal supports. CAPP is partnering with the many systems that serve vulnerable children and families to create and implement coordinated practices and aligned policies that:

- Understand, engage and value the strengths and resources of families and their supportive communities and tribes; and
- Make available and support the use of culturally-based and trauma-informed support services to address the specific needs of children and their families.

FOUNDATIONAL WORK TO DATE

CAPP sites have conducted local child welfare system reviews and analyses to better understand and address the systemic barriers that undermine achieving optimal permanency outcomes for children and families. System Issues identified across all sites included:

1. Weak and insufficient engagement practices
2. Lack of family voice and urgent and sustained permanency
3. Lack of relevant, timely, well-coordinated services
4. Lack of accurate understanding of family strengths and needs

A Child and Family Practice Model has been developed that includes a front line practice approach designed to address the systemic issues above. The four front line practices are:

1. Exploration and Engagement
2. Power of Family
3. Circle of Support
4. Healing Trauma

LEANING IN, LIFTING UP AND CONNECTING TO CULTURE

The four front line practices have been translated into specific behaviors that are being utilized by social workers and partners in their day-to-day interactions to ensure that they are:

- Leaning in – meaningfully engaging and empowering families
- Lifting up– empowering families to advocate for needed supports and services
- Connecting – bringing a natural circle of family community and tribal supports together
- Culture – supporting families in using cultural practices to promote healing and wholeness

GETTING STARTED AND GETTING BETTER

CAPP Sites are implementing the Child and Family Practice Model and are engaging in a variety of activities needed to establish an optimum environment to support and sustain the Practice Model. They include:

- An active and involved community
- Shared commitment to the practice model
- Capacity –building and installation

Fresno, Humboldt, Los Angeles and Santa Clara are:

- Addressing system barriers by working with local partners to develop culturally relevant and trauma informed services to meet the needs of local children and families.
- Developing implementation teams with representatives from leadership, staff and community and Tribes to manage and support all aspects of implementation.
- Creating coaching practices to help individuals and systems build the skills and structures needed to support the effective and consistent use of the practice behaviors.
- Preparing to evaluate the Child and Family Practice Model by determining if the practice behaviors are being implemented consistently.

The information on the following pages outlines the specific work going on in each of the CAPP counties as we all work at Getting Started and Getting Better!

FRESNO COUNTY UPDATE

Over these past months Fresno County has conducted the following Implementation Stage activities in partnership with their local community and tribal partners:

- **Addressing System Barriers**
 - o Fresno County has continued on their path to build community and tribal relationships and address system barriers based on their Institutional Analysis and Action Plan developed in 2010. Continuing work includes:
 - Identification of tribal service providers who have been approved through the courts in order to broaden service array for Native American populations.
 - Ongoing efforts to integrate various local and statewide initiatives to eliminate silos and streamline social worker practice aimed at improving the continuity of services and support for families.
 - Implementing a variety of pilot programs that are aimed at providing support for the most vulnerable youth, particularly related to developing and securing permanent connections. Most recently partnering with a community-based organization, Street Saints, to develop a mentoring program that provides permanency support to youth in long-term foster care with the goal of stepping down or out of care.
- **Implementation Teams**
 - o Fresno County's Implementation Team is made up of individuals with members with diverse yet complimentary skill sets, including individuals from child welfare leadership, project management, data analysis, social worker line staff, regional training academy and community members.
 - o The team has been in place and functioning for well over a year. They guide the work as well as act as a bridge between line staff and agency leadership. They are responsible for ensuring effective communication through feedback loops that provide information and feedback regarding identifying system barriers and addressing solutions.
 - o The dedicated resources for the Implementation Team have allowed for effective installation of the Practice Model.
 - o The recent focus of the Team's efforts has been in developing a coaching framework, preparing for formative evaluation and developing communication and feedback loops between leadership and line staff and leadership and coaches.
- **Coaching for Competence**
 - o Fresno is developing a team of coaches with expertise in Safety Organized Practice, Cultural Humility/Racial Sobriety and the CAPP Practice Model. They have been training and coaching social workers over the past year.
 - o Community members have been hired as coaches from the African American community and they are in the process of hiring a tribal coach as well.
 - o In an effort to build capacity and sustain the implementation of the Practice Model the focus of their coaching has shifted to the supervisor level.
 - o They have developed a coaching framework and a service delivery plan and are working with the supervisors to develop both practice and assessment skills as well as their coaching skills.
- **Fidelity Assessment**
 - o Fresno County's Fidelity Assessment was developed with the input of local partners and was tested and refined by the Implementation Team over several months.
 - o In February, an orientation was held with local community partners to familiarize them with the Fidelity Assessment protocol and train them in relation to their role as observers in the Fidelity Assessment process.
 - o The meeting was well attended and plans to proceed with Fidelity Assessments on all social workers currently implementing the Practice Model began in March.

CAPP has provided Fresno County with an opportunity to resource, activate and energize efforts that began in response to their Institutional Analysis and that were part of their System Improvement Plan. During the process, the voice of the community was heard and has had a significant impact on the development and implementation of the Practice Model.

Over these past months, Humboldt County conducted the following Implementation Stage activities in partnership with their local tribes:

- **Addressing System Barriers**
 - o Humboldt County continues to convene a monthly Advisory Team meeting to address system and practice issues. The team consists of 25-40 members who represent tribal leaders and partners, Department of Health and Human Services leadership and staff, as well as other community partners.
 - o They are beginning to conduct a review of their child welfare system to identify barriers. A review of tribal cases is currently underway with input from the Advisory Team.
 - o Department of Health and Human Services leadership has started to regularly meet with local tribal leadership to receive guidance and direction on the system review process and focus.
 - o A recent Standing Order from the Court now allows Child Welfare Services to communicate and work with local tribes directly when they get a report of child abuse or neglect of an American Indian child that is or may be a member of a local tribe. This provides a foundation for early coordination of services and supports and assists with the provision of Active Efforts as part of the Indian Child Welfare Act.
 - o The county has convened working meetings with tribal partners, social workers and legal representatives to develop the policies and procedures that will guide the implementation of the Standing Order. These working meetings have evolved into regular monthly meetings to address case-related issues and broader system issues that come up as partnership moves forward.
 - o Weekly meetings between Yurok Tribe Social Services and Child Welfare Services have recently started to staff joint cases that require deeper collaboration.
 - o Together with the Advisory Team, Child Welfare Services developed and convened a cultural training for social workers, supervisors and managers. The three-day training included presentations and panels that provided information on the history and historical trauma of the American Indian Community, the individual perspectives and experiences of American Indians involved in child welfare, and the opportunities for healing and recovery in a cultural context.
- **Implementation Teams**
 - o Humboldt County's Implementation Team consists of child welfare supervisors, managers, staff and analysts. They are working to grow and evolve the team representation as they move further into the implementation of the Practice Model.
 - o The Implementation Team meets weekly to discuss what is needed to support the initial implementation of the Practice Model. Their work at this phase includes identifying and developing the training needed to orient social workers to the CAPP Child and Family Practice Model and support the development of coaches as well as addressing other internal organizational logistics.
 - o They have developed a training workgroup comprised of members from their Advisory Team who provide support for the training development and implementation.
- **Coaching for Competence**
 - o Currently, Humboldt has hired four coaches to support implementation of the Practice Model. The coaches are community and tribal leaders who are respected for their work in the community. The community member coaches will work with supervisors as they coach the initial social workers implementing the Practice Model.
 - o In collaboration with their coaches, they are developing the appropriate training and orientation to prepare the coaches to begin to support and guide social workers with implementation of the Practice Model.
 - o The goal is to build capacity for internal coaching by utilizing supervisors in conjunction with community coaches and expand that approach as they move forward.
- **Fidelity Assessment**
 - o Humboldt is in the beginning weeks of the implementation of the CAPP Child and Family Practice Model.
 - o The Fidelity Assessments will be integrated into that process after 6 months of implementation activities.
 - o Currently the county is developing a framework for their Fidelity Assessment and will begin working with community members to prepare them to participate in the observation process of that work.

The implementation of CAPP has offered an opportunity for Humboldt County to build and improve their existing relationships with their local tribal communities. Their work on CAPP has grown from an evolving understanding and respect for the approaches and strengths of their community and resulted in the development of a foundation for a productive partnership as they move forward in the implementation of a Practice Model that will best serve the needs of American Indian children and families.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY UPDATE

Over these past months, Los Angeles County has conducted the following Implementation Stage activities in partnership with their local community:

- **Addressing System Barriers**
 - o Los Angeles County recently released their System Review and Analysis at a meeting attended by over 100 local stakeholders including community members, services providers and department leadership and staff.
 - o The Review and Analysis cites the commitment of the leadership of DCFS as well as the Los Angeles Juvenile courts. In his opening remarks, Phillip Browning, Director of the Department of Children and Family Services, noted that “the study has helped us focus our efforts on improving the outcomes for our African American Children in foster care.” He further stated that he “looked forward to working with our community partners in accomplishing those goals.” All attendees were interested and engaged in the presentation and discussion and were eager to understand next steps.
 - o Moving forward, DCFS will work to align the recommendations in the System Analysis with the local Strategic Plan that was released last year. Teams will be responsible for developing strategies to address the system barriers identified in the review and align them with the activities outlined in the Strategic Plan.
 - o The goal is to have improved service delivery by 2015. The first objective in achieving that goal is the implementation the Shared Core Practice Model that incorporates the key elements of the CAPP Practice Model in collaboration with other departments and local efforts.
- **Implementation Teams**
 - o Los Angeles has three offices that are working to implement the Core Practice Model: Pomona, Wateridge and Torrance.
 - o Each office has established their own Implementation team with representation from parents, youth and other stakeholders from those respective communities in addition to local leadership and staff.
 - o The teams meet every two weeks to monitor implementation, highlight successes and develop goals for the upcoming weeks. They work together to identify and address system barriers and craft solutions. Their motto is: Do It, Find it, Create It!
- **Coaching for Competence**
 - o As with many things in CAPP, the coaching process in Los Angeles has evolved over time. Initially training staff was used to provide coaching support. These early efforts revealed the need to develop a different approach and to build capacity for ongoing coaching for workers and supervisors.
 - o A Coaching 101 framework was created as a way of introducing coaching concepts and practices to new groups of supervisors and social workers beginning the implementation of the Practice Model. This allowed for them to understand the fundamentals of coaching in order to be better prepared to engage in the activity and receive the support.
 - o Community partners have provided guidance to the process and the evolution of the approach in Los Angeles.
- **Fidelity Assessment**
 - o One Los Angeles office has begun the process of testing the fidelity of the Practice Model. Since Pomona began implementation over 6 months ago they were in the first position to conduct their Fidelity Assessment.
 - o The Wateridge and Torrance Offices are expected to begin that process later this year. They are currently working to identify the role of community partners.

In addition to implementing CAPP and ensuring its alignment with other key efforts in the county, Los Angeles is undergoing a major reorganization, consolidating bureaus and shifting leadership in an effort to streamline processes and infuse common sense, critical thinking and accountability into daily practice. This will provide additional opportunities to incorporate and institutionalize the Shared Core Practice Model and address the system capacity issues and barriers in order to improve outcomes for children and families.

Over these past months, Santa Clara County has been conducting the following Installation Stage activities in partnership with local community and Tribes:

- **Addressing System Barriers**
 - o Santa Clara County has a Leadership Team that meets every other week to address the barriers that have arisen during implementation. The Leadership Teams consists of the Implementation Team, Department of Family and Children's Services (DFCS) managers, the Agency Staff Development Manager, CAPP trained supervisors, county mental health representatives, Bay Area Academy representatives, the San Jose State University School of Social Work Title IV E Coordinator, the CAPP Community Engagement Specialist, and internal coaches.
 - o There is a strong partnership between the community and the Leadership Team with community partners playing a key role in addressing system barriers.
 - o Community partners meet regularly with a Community Engagement specialist where they receive updates and provide input and guidance for CAPP implementation.
 - o The Community Engagement Specialist attends the Leadership Team and provides input, guidance and feedback.
 - o CAPP Leadership Team addresses a variety of issues that arise including addressing the evolving coaching challenges and resource needs as well as the assessing roles and responsibilities of Social Workers, Supervisors and Coaches.
 - o In an effort to ensure all county partners have an understanding of CAPP, trainings will be conducted with a variety of court partners including the County Council.
- **Implementation Teams**
 - o Santa Clara Counties Implementation Team meets weekly.
 - o Members of the team include the CAPP Project Manager, staff development training manager, a project manager from the DFCS Administrative Support Bureau and staff from staff development and from the agency office of operations and planning.
 - o The membership has recently expanded to include the Community Engagement Specialist and external coaches.
 - o Implementation team members and community stakeholders have attended and participated in number of training and meetings to improve their understanding of trauma and healing, teaming, cultural humility, Implementation Science as well as receiving technical support and sharing their successes and challenges with other CAPP sites.
- **Coaching for Competence**
 - o The coaching approach in Santa Clara has evolved since their first efforts at providing this type of support to social workers implementing the Practice Model.
 - o They have provided continued coaching support to CAPP Trained supervisors and staff through the use of internal and external coaches.
 - o They continue to work to develop mechanisms to improve staffs use and understanding of coaching as well as the important role it plays in consistent application of the 23 practice behaviors
 - o In concert with leadership they are exploring the resources and infrastructure needed for an effective coaching system.
 - o Community partners participate in the core training of the group of social workers preparing to implement CAPP. Their participation helps lift up and inspires the attendees by providing the perspectives and opinions of the birth parents, youth and caregivers, and lays the foundation for the work ahead.
- **Fidelity Assessment**
 - o Santa Clara is in the initial phase of the Fidelity Assessment where they are beginning the observation process with two social workers on selected cases.
 - o This process allows social workers to become comfortable with the Fidelity Assessment Process where their interactions with clients are observed to understand and support their use of the 23 practice behaviors.
 - o They are meeting with community partners to discuss the variety of opportunities for contribution and to identify the role they will play in this process.

Santa Clara enjoys a partnership with a strong core group of community members that has developed over the course of this work. They are a highly dedicated group of individuals that are passionate about working together to improve the system and supports for children and families.

CAPP-AT-A-GLANCE

- *In partnership with local community and tribes CAPP has developed and is implementing a Child and Family Practice Model in four counties.*
- *The Child and Family Practice Model has been developed for all children being served by child welfare with a focus on partnering with communities whose children have been in foster care the longest.*
- *The goal is to provide children with the greatest support possible to safely remain with their families, return to their families, or live with relatives or those with whom they have significant family or tribal relationships. This approach is designed to lead to fewer children and youth in long-term foster care as well as fewer entries into foster care in the first place.*
- *Through this effort we are working to build a statewide foundation for a comprehensive and culturally responsive approach to both practice and system level change that is responsive to the strengths and underlying needs of children, youth and families involved in the child welfare system.*

WHAT'S NEXT

We will continue to learn, evolve and improve the implementation of the Child and Family Practice Model. Toward that goal we will:

- Continue our outreach and involvement of community and tribes in the implementation of the Practice Model.
- Work with system partners to ensure coordinated efforts and interactions with children and families.
- Evaluate the Child and Family Practice Model by employing a two-phase process:
 - The Formative Evaluation: The evaluation will first determine if the Model is working as intended by examining administrative data and surveying parents/guardians. If the model is not working as intended, CAPP will refine it and test it again before proceeding.
 - The Summative Evaluation: This evaluation phase will test the impact of the Model. In the long-term CAPP expects to:
 1. Reduce the number of children in long-term foster care.
 2. Increase the number and timeliness of permanent exits from foster care.
 3. Decrease re-entry into foster care
 4. Decrease non-permanent exits from foster care.
 5. Reduce disparity in achieving outcomes for certain populations of children at highest risk of long-term foster care.
- Continue to engage in local and statewide efforts to identify and address systemic barriers.
- Work to integrate CAPP values and partnership approach with other emerging practice models to create an integrated model that addresses the system challenges and serves the needs of vulnerable children and families in California.

To learn more about California Partners for Permanency, contact Karen Gunderson, Project Director, at the California Department of Social Services karen.gunderson@dss.ca.gov or 916.651.7395.

To learn more about the work underway in CAPP's four early implementing counties, contact these CAPP Project Managers:

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CAPP is a five-year federally funded project to reduce long-term foster care. To learn more, visit www.reducefostercarenow.org or contact Karen Gunderson, CAPP Project Director, at the California Department of Social Services, (916) 651.7395 or karen.gunderson@dss.ca.gov.

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