



CONTINUUM OF CARE REFORM

CCR builds on California's current reform efforts

Approved Relative Caregivers Program (ARC)

Participating counties support relative caregivers with a payment equal to the basic foster care rate.

Child and Family Teaming

An effective approach to coordinated care and case planning for all children and youth in the child welfare system.

Pathways to Mental Health

Originating from the Katie A. lawsuit settlement, Pathways is intended to improve the coordination between child welfare and mental health systems so that children in foster care receive timely, and effective individualized mental health services.

Quality Parenting Initiative

Will create new strategies and practices within child welfare for the recruitment and retention of quality caregivers, and support biological parents with reunification efforts.

Residentially-Based Services Reform (RBS)

A demonstration project begun in 2008 that tested a short-term residential program model with ongoing community-based services and support, and which serves as the foundation for STRTC.

Resource Family Approval (RFA) Program

A pilot program that provides upfront training and assessment of families seeking to parent children in foster care will expand statewide.

ASSESSMENT

In child welfare and juvenile probation services an assessment process is used to gather information about the child's and family's strengths, needs, resiliency, current safety and risk for future abuse or neglect, mental health concerns, substance use, housing needs, employment, educational needs, access to and involvement with other community services providers, and exposure to trauma. This assessment provides the basis for the services and supports identified in the case plan that are to be provided to children and families. For instance, if the assessment indicates the child has developmental needs or mental health needs, referrals are made to the appropriate regional center or mental health provider for further assessment. The assessment also informs the placement needs of the child. Assessments are not a one-time event, but rather an ongoing process throughout the life of a case which inform updates to the case plan.

WHAT'S NEW?

Several years ago, state law increased the timeframe to develop the case from 30 to 60 days in order to allow more time to engage families and solicit their input into the case plan. Assembly Bill 403 reaffirms the expectation that the agency collaborate with the child, youth, and family in the assessment and case planning process by defining the role of a [Child and Family Team](#). This practice is consistent with the [California Child Welfare Core Practice Model](#) under development by California county child welfare agencies.

Using mental health as an example, if the information gathered in the child and family assessment process identifies that a child or youth has mental health needs the child or youth is then referred to an appropriate provider. This process is known as a mental health screening and is conducted upon initial entry into the foster care system and then generally annually thereafter.

In mental health settings, assessments are a formal practice which is more narrowly focused on an individual child and provides an in-depth evaluation of underlying needs and mental health concerns, including an assessment of psychosocial risk factors related to a child's environment including a trauma assessment component, as well as a clinical assessment of current functioning.

While child welfare and mental health assessment are different, they do overlap. The graphic below illustrates the interconnections between the two processes.



MORE INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

- [CCR: A Report to the Legislature](#)
- [Assembly Bill 403 \(Chapter 773, Statutes of 2015\)](#)
- For additional information or questions, please contact: CCR@dss.ca.gov.