



## 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

The Resource Family Approval (RFA) program was developed to help meet California's goal of ensuring that all children live in committed, nurturing, and permanent families. Specifically, RFA establishes a new family-friendly and child-centered approval process for all related and non-related families seeking to care for children and youth in foster care. Because this new process consolidates and replaces existing requirements (foster parent licensing and certification, relative approval, adoption, and guardianship approvals) no additional home approvals are necessary should a family wish to pursue adoption or guardianship of a child in foster care (updates to the approval will occur at least annually and may be necessary if there are changes in the household or personal life events). Under the program, which will be statewide beginning January 2017, all caregivers of children and youth in foster care are approved to be "resource families." Once approved, a Resource Family is able to be an emergency, temporary, and/or permanent family for a child.

### WHAT WILL CHANGE?

RFA requires enhanced assessments of caregiver and training for all resource families, including those related to the child. This training is to better prepare families to care for children who have experienced the kinds of trauma that leads to children entering foster care.

The enhanced assessment determines the caregiver's ability to meet developmental, safety, permanence, and well-being needs of children, the capacity to act as a prudent parent in providing normal childhood experiences, the ability to cooperate with agency and service providers, the ability to provide and maintain financial stability, the ability to maintain the least restrictive and most family-like environment, and an assessment of the caregivers support system.

The goal is that better prepared families will lead to fewer placement changes for children enabling children to have stable, nurturing relationships with caregivers and to focus on school and other childhood activities.

### BENEFITS

- RFA is a streamlined process that includes one application, one background check and a combined home environment, and psychosocial assessment. This will eliminate redundant paperwork for families and maximize the efficient use of staff and system resources.
- The improved approval standards will be consistent regardless of a child's case plan. This allows for a seamless transition to permanency through adoption or guardianship when a child is unable to return to his or her parents.
- Increased stability in foster care will assist you with developing supportive lifelong relationships and improved outcomes for children, youth and young adults.

### MORE INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

- Please contact: [CCR@dss.ca.gov](mailto:CCR@dss.ca.gov).

