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## Children & Family Services Division Office of Child Abuse Prevention

### STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

*A framework for child abuse and neglect prevention*

Family Resource Centers, local First 5 agencies, and the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) have played key roles in implementing the Strengthening Families framework in California. In September 2010, a convening of leaders was held to explore statewide implementation. Commissioner Bryan Samuels, of the United States Administration for Children Youth and Families, provided insight into lessons learned by other states in using the framework. Commissioner Samuels encouraged California's efforts to move forward and emphasized support for the framework at the federal level. Strategies—a technical assistance and training agency—and the OCAP are currently supporting the statewide adoption of this framework through a state roundtable which meets quarterly. Nonprofit and government agencies are implementing this framework in both existing and new programs. The framework supports increased collaboration, as well as an integrated method to prevent child abuse and neglect which encourages optimal development for children and stronger families.

The Strengthening Families framework is research-based and originates from the Center for the Study of Social Policy. It involves building specific protective factors around children by working differently with their families, and is designed to lessen or negate the influence of risk factors.

The five protective factors that are identified within strong, healthy children and families are:

- Parental resilience: The ability to cope and bounce back from all types of challenges.
- Social connections: Friends, family members, neighbors, and other members of a community who provide emotional support and concrete assistance to parents.
- Knowledge of parenting and child development: Accurate information about raising young children and appropriate expectations for their behavior.
- Concrete support in time of need: Families having access to basic needs and necessary services, including financial security, food, clothing, shelter, and health care.
- Children's social and emotional development: A child's ability to interact positively with others and communicate his or her emotions effectively.

A number of counties have implemented some level of the framework and received technical assistance and training through Strategies (please see the [Strategies](#) fact sheet). These include El Dorado, Inyo, Lake, Lassen, Los Angeles, Mariposa, Mendocino, Merced, Mono, Nevada, Orange, Placer, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Joaquin, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, Ventura, and Yolo counties. Many other counties have received training on the framework and are interested in implementation.