



CDSS

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES



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July 29, 2015

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-52-15

TO: COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
COUNTY CHIEF PROBATION OFFICERS
TITLE IV-E TRIBES
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES PROGRAM MANAGERS
FOSTER FAMILY AGENCIES
PRIVATE ADOPTIONS AGENCIES
CDSS ADOPTIONS DISTRICT OFFICES

SUBJECT: UPDATED STANDARDS FOR CALIFORNIA WRAPAROUND SERVICES

REFERENCE: [ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-28-99](#)

The purpose of this All County Information Notice (ACIN) is to transmit updated standards for California Wraparound Services. This update replaces the previous Wraparound Standards issued via ACIN I-28-99.

Background

In 1997, Senate Bill 163 established Wraparound Services as an alternative to placing children in high-level group home care. Wraparound is a practice of partnering with families to provide intensive services to children and families with complex needs using a team-based approach. A child and family team develops and follows a service plan that is comprehensive, family-centered, strengths-based, and needs driven. Originally developed and released in 1999, the standards articulate how to operationalize programs and services that reflect family-centered principles of care. Since their release, Wraparound Services programs established and operating pursuant to California Welfare and Institutions Code, Sections 18250-18258 are expected to adhere to these standards. Today, the California Wraparound Standards continue to serve as the foundation for Wraparound Services programs in

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

California, and have become a widely used resource for describing essential elements of a high quality Wraparound Services program.

Update

In July 2014, a workgroup established by the California Wraparound Advisory Committee began a comprehensive review of the Standards. The workgroup was comprised of Wraparound experts from the state, counties, providers, and families who are committed to supporting high-quality Wraparound Services in California. Over the course of several months and following a consensus-based process, the workgroup identified where repetition could be eliminated and where opportunities existed to add clarity.

While no major changes were made to the content, the total number of individual standards has been decreased from 85 to 39. The result is that the document is much easier to understand and integrate into local practice. In addition, the principles and essential elements of Wraparound now appear in the Introduction and the standards themselves are organized around three domains: Program/Practice, Fiscal, and Administration.

For questions about the updated California Wraparound Standards or the Wraparound Program please call the Resources Development and Training Support Bureau, at (916) 651-6000, or e-mail the Wraparound mailbox at Wraparound.Questions@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

KEVIN GAINES, Chief
Child Protection and Family Support Branch

Attachment

c: CWDA
CPOC
CBHDA
All Mental Health Directors

Background and History

Wraparound was established in California under Senate Bill (SB) 163 (Chapter 795, Statutes of 1997) to allow California counties to develop the Wraparound Model using State and County Foster Care dollars. After the initial pilot ended in 2001, Wraparound became a fully operational program available to all California counties. County participation has remained high, with an average of 45-48 California counties implementing Wraparound.

What is Wraparound?

The purpose of Wraparound is to provide eligible children and youth with family-based alternatives to group home care. Wraparound is a family-centered, strengths-based, and needs driven planning process for children, youth, and families that take place in a team setting. Wraparound is funded using flexible Child Welfare Services Realignment Local Revenue Fund and Adoption Assistance Program (AAP) dollars. Wraparound provides children and youth who have complex needs with comprehensive and cost effective intensive, coordinated, highly individualized interventions and linkage to services.

Wraparound is a collaborative approach to care that encourages coordination across agencies, disciplines, and communities to enhance outcomes for children and families. The Wraparound model enhances safety, permanency, and well-being for children and youth consistent with state and federal mandates. Wraparound is considered a promising practice that is complimentary to a variety of other practice models.

Wraparound is always:

- Voluntary and promotes family ownership.
- Family-centered, individualized, culturally relevant, trauma informed, and needs driven.
- A strengths-based planning process that takes place in a team setting in the child, youth, and family's community at a time and location convenient to the family.
- Flexible and creative to meet the evolving needs of children, youth, and families.
- Building natural and community supports.
- Guided by a child and family team plan that identifies family strengths and service needs.

- Focused on ensuring children and youth are in the least restrictive environment.
- Tracking and evaluating outcomes.
- Cost effective, which includes maximizing resources and leveraging alternate funding sources.
- Striving for creative solutions to meet the needs of children, youth, and families.

Wraparound seeks to:

- Enhance individual strengths by creating intervention plans that reflect and build on the child, youth, and family strengths.
- Promote child, youth, and parent involvement through family voice, choice, and preference.
- Use a community-based service delivery system.
- Approach service delivery through an integrated system.
- Create independence and stability.
- Provide interventions that meet a child, youth, and family's identified needs, and fit with their culture and preferences.
- Create an individualized plan to coordinate responses in all life domains.
- Focus on achieving goals through collaboration.
- Access flexible funding to support the child, youth, and family team goals.
- Stabilize or transition children and youth to a family setting.
- Support children, youth, and families in meeting court mandates.
- Enhance safety, permanency, and well-being.
- Integrate trauma-informed practices.
- Support, achieve, and measure positive outcomes.

Key Principles and Elements

These Wraparound Standards were created to articulate and operationalize the principles and key elements that are the foundation of the Wraparound process.

Wraparound Principles¹:

1. Family Voice and Choice
2. Team-Based Decision Making
3. Natural Supports
4. Collaboration
5. Community-Based Service Delivery
6. Culturally Respectful and Relevant
7. Individualized Services
8. Strengths-Based Support
9. Persistence
10. Focus on Outcomes

Essential Elements² of Wraparound include:

1. Families have a high level of decision-making power at every level of the Wraparound process.
2. Wraparound is a team-driven process that involves the child, youth, and family's natural supports, peer supports, agencies, and community services working together to develop, implement, and evaluate an individualized service plan.
3. Wraparound plans include a balance of formal services and informal community and family resources, with greater reliance on informal supports over time.
4. The plan is developed and implemented based on an interagency and community collaborative process.
5. Wraparound efforts are based in the community and encourage the family's use of their natural supports and resources.
6. The process is culturally relevant, building on the unique values, preferences, and strengths of children, youth, and families, and their communities.
7. Services and supports are individualized, built on strengths, and meet the needs of children and families across life domains to promote success, safety, and permanency in their homes, schools, and the communities.

¹ Adapted from Ten Principles of the Wraparound Process, Bruns, E.J., et al, 2004

² Elements adapted from Bruns and Goldman, 1998

8. The Wraparound process and the Wraparound plan identify, build on, and enhance the capabilities, knowledge, skills, and assets of the child and family.
9. Team members are persevering in their commitment to the child and family.
10. Outcomes are determined and measured for the system, for the program, and for the individual child, youth and family.
11. Wraparound teams have adequate and flexible funding.

The Wraparound Standards are organized into the following domains:

- I. Program/Practice
 - Engagement
 - Planning
 - Implementation
 - Transition
- II. Fiscal
- III. Administration
 - Policies and Procedures
 - System Alignment
 - Human Resources
 - Education, Training and Staff Development
 - Evaluation and Outcomes

The goal of this document is to ensure quality and to support increased uniformity in practices related to the development, implementation, and support of Wraparound, while continuing to encourage innovation in our work with children and families. It is a living document that will change over time to reflect our best thinking and expanded knowledge of best practices.

PROGRAM/PRACTICE**OVERVIEW**

The Program/Practice section contains standards that relate to direct contact with children and families and the program infrastructure that supports the provision of strengths-based, family-centered, needs-driven individualized services. The overall emphasis is on standards that promote and sustain a service delivery process resulting in a service and support plan focusing on protecting at-risk children and youth assisting and supporting families in caring for their children and youth, ensuring safety, and promoting stability. Service provision is organized to reflect a consistent process that accurately matches services and supports with needs, in a manner that promotes a high level of family decision-making and parent/family partnership in care.

Direct service provision is divided into four sub-domains: 1) Engagement, 2) Planning, 3) Implementation, and 4) Transition.

PRO.1 Engagement

- PRO.1.1 Families have a high level of decision-making power in all aspects of planning, delivery and evaluation of services and supports.
- PRO.1.2 Child, youth, and family teams assess and address immediate crisis/safety needs.
- PRO.1.3 Wraparound implements, promotes, and supports the use of a non-judgmental, non-blaming, voluntary family-centered approach in partnering with families.
- PRO.1.4 Providers recognize that each family, each child, and each youth has unique individual, family, and community strengths.
- PRO.1.5 Strengths, needs, and culture assessment is clearly defined, communicated to all team members early in engagement, and ongoing.
- PRO.1.6 In developing a team, both formal and informal members are involved, as identified by the child, youth, and family.

PRO.2 Planning

PRO.2.1 There is a written plan that is based on the strengths, needs, and culture of the child, youth, and family, and focused on the child, youth and family’s vision and mission

PRO.2.2 Family plans are comprehensive and address the priority life domains of the child, youth, and family:

- Safety
- Emotional Well-Being
- Family
- A place to live
- School
- Work
- Cultural
- Spiritual
- Social/fun
- Legal
- Medical/health
- Finances
- Relationships
- Developmental Needs or Independent Living Skills
- Other

PRO.3 Implementation

PRO.3.1 Child, youth, and family team meetings are responsive to immediate child, youth, and family needs while also maintaining a clear vision of the family plan. Team meetings are where planning occurs, decisions are made, and celebrations are held.

PRO.3.2 Families have timely access to an array of services and supports that are well-coordinated, tailored to meet their individual needs, and delivered in the communities in which they live.

PRO.3.3 Providers access and maximize the use of informal family and sustainable community resources to meet family and child needs in the communities in which they live.

PRO.3.4 The team monitors progress of the family and plan implementation, and modifies the plan as necessary.

PRO.4 Transition

PRO.4.1 Transition planning occurs throughout the Wraparound process.

PRO.4.2 Transition includes strategies to shift from formal to informal services and supports.

PRO.4.3 Plans set benchmarks for transitioning to less restrictive, less intrusive, and less formal services, taking into consideration the ability of families to move through the process at their own pace.

FISCAL

OVERVIEW

The Fiscal section contains standards that are related to the fiscal practices, procedures, and structures necessary to ensure accountability, fairness, and efficiency in the use of fiscal resources to support and sustain Wraparound. Fiscal policies and procedures should be aligned with the values and principles of Wraparound in order to ensure and support the provision of strengths-based, family-centered, needs-driven, and individualized process.

FIS.1 Fiscal

- FIS.1.1 The County or organization has policies and procedures to ensure:
- Child and family teams have timely access to flexible funds, including mechanisms to access emergency funds.
 - Tracking and accounting of flexible funds occurs.
 - Ongoing communication about availability and use of flexible funds and fiscal impact.
 - Funding follows the needs of the child, youth, and family.
- FIS.1.2 Policies and procedures to ensure that any cost savings realized from utilizing Wraparound funding are reinvested to further expand or enhance services and resources for children and families.
- FIS.1.3 Policies and procedures to ensure tracking the use of reinvested funds including a program description, budget, expended funds, target population, number served and outcomes.

ADMINISTRATION

OVERVIEW

The Administration section of the standards pertains to the organization and implementation of the leadership functions supporting the Wraparound approach. This includes the Wraparound agency's internal priorities and their relationship to the community and system of care. Internally, the emphasis is on the creation of effective operational environments for the development and delivery of quality supports and services. These include, but are not limited to, areas such as:

- 1) Policies and procedures
- 2) Establishment of philosophies of care that articulate the Wraparound approach
- 3) Promotion of inclusive opportunities for families to be involved in leadership roles within the organization, and
- 4) Organizational decision-making strategies

Externally, the emphasis is on structures and processes that bring the system of care together to support and sustain the Wraparound approach. This includes a focus on strategies for:

- 1) Ensuring that family-centered care practices are employed system-wide
- 2) Establishing compatible policies and procedures to support family decision-making and flexible service delivery, and
- 3) Creating opportunities for families, public agency staff (e.g., social welfare, mental health, probation, education), service providers, and community members to work collaboratively in planning system supports for implementing and sustaining Wraparound.

This section also includes standards regarding policy and procedures, system alignment, human resources, education, training and staff development, and evaluation and outcomes.

ADM.1 POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- ADM.1.1 Family members are included in the design, development, and quality improvement of the Wraparound model.

- ADM.1.2 The organization has a child, youth, and family advocacy and support program that is integrated with service planning, program development, service implementation, and quality improvement efforts.
- ADM.1.3 Wraparound eligibility and referral criteria do not exclude families because of the severity or nature of their needs.
- ADM.1.4 The child and family team is the primary decision-making forum regarding strengths, needs, and service provision.
- ADM.1.5 Support of the Wraparound process is in the form of memorandums of understanding, vision and mission statements, joint training plans, shared management structures, and/or interagency strategic plans.
- ADM.1.6 Leadership has a written philosophy of care statement that operationalizes the Wraparound process.
- ADM.1.7 A process is in place for review of family plans at the systems and community level, based on values, principles, and process of Wraparound.
- ADM.1.8 Leadership's operational plan includes stakeholder involvement at program design, service planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- ADM.1.9 Wraparound model must include the following functions:
- Facilitation
 - Family support
 - Peer advocacy and leadership
 - Mentoring and coaching
 - Community resource development
 - Service evaluation
 - Cross-system collaboration and teaming

ADM.2 SYSTEM ALIGNMENT

ADM.2.1 The organization has an established, broad-based stakeholder community team to:

- Involve children, youth, and families in leadership forums on policy design and Wraparound implementation.
- Set the direction (vision, mission) and establish an interagency strategic plan for implementing and supporting the Wraparound approach system-wide
- Identify and support cross-agency training to promote family-centered care practices and the Wraparound approach
- Identify interagency barriers to service delivery and strategies for removing them
- Serve as a community collaborative for program improvement
- Enact procedures for quality assurance monitoring and for continuous quality improvement efforts that reflect the values of Wraparound and family-centered practice.

ADM.2.2 There is a community/cross-system review panel for periodically reviewing:

- Initial and updated family plans
- Policies and procedures that govern flex funds (such as challenges and flex funds)
- Fidelity to Wraparound practices and processes

ADM. 2.3 Implementation efforts include:

- Mutually supporting implementation of family-centered care practices
- Cross-system problem-solving
- Shared decision-making
- Addressing and promoting consistent support from leadership
- Working collaboratively to share information
- Coordinating cross-disciplinary training

ADM.3 **HUMAN RESOURCES**

This section emphasizes organizational practices that support staff in adopting new roles with families and with each other across agencies and systems. This includes methods and practices that assist staff with such elements as:

- 1) Shifting from a professionally-centered service model to a family-centered service model,
- 2) Shifting from the professional as expert to the family as expert,
- 3) Shifting to a model of professional as facilitator,
- 4) Shifting from prescribers of treatment to facilitators of family decision-making, and
- 5) Shifting from service strategies that attempt to fit families into available options to service strategies that blend informal and formal service and support options to create care plans individualized to child, youth, and family specific needs.

To achieve this, agencies and organizations should have in place mechanisms to ensure that staff recruitment, development and supervision are aligned with the vision and principles of the Wraparound approach. The human resource function of the organization plays a central role in supporting the Wraparound approach by assisting staff to align program support mechanisms to promote:

- 1) Staff flexibility (e.g., staff roles, time and location of service delivery, availability of staff, etc.),
- 2) Management and supervisory structures and methods that model the Wraparound approach on a daily basis (e.g., access and voice in program planning, promotion of a high level of staff decision-making, operating from a strengths and needs-based perspective rather than deficit-based staff development model, etc.), and
- 3) To promote performance appraisal processes for direct service staff, supervisors, managers, and administrators that are aligned with and reward achievement for the Wraparound care approach.

ADM.3.1 Staff reflects the cultural diversity and language competency of the children, youth, families, and communities served.

ADM.3.2 Programs encourage and promote staff creativity and flexibility.

ADM. 3.3 Job descriptions for direct service, supervisory, management, administrative, and support staff include job-specific performance responsibilities/expectations regarding Wraparound.

ADM.4 **EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

To ensure active family participation and the effective implementation of the Wraparound approach, families in care, direct service, supervisory and administrative staff must have the education, training, and support they need to design, implement, operate and improve Wraparound practices, structures and operations.

This includes staff development efforts intended to assist staff in:

- 1) Acquiring the skills needed to effectively implement family-centered care practices,
- 2) Promoting strong and sustainable parent/family–professional partnerships,
- 3) Assembling and participating on collaborative teams for planning and implementing services and supports, and
- 4) Developing capacities for ensuring that families are positively and actively engaged in every aspect of planning, implementation, and evaluation of services and supports.

Recognition is also placed on the development and support of parent/family education and training which promotes parents/families being effective participants, leaders, and informed decision-makers in:

- 1) Planning,
- 2) Designing creative service and support strategies, and
- 3) Participating in decision-making at the practice, program and system levels of operations.

To ensure comprehensive support within the system of care, efforts are promoted that include community and cross-systems education and training so that:

- 1) Team members from other systems have a context for Wraparound participation,
- 2) Staff alignment on service principles and practices is promoted.

ADM.4.1 A training plan will be developed based on the values and principles of Wraparound.

ADM.4.2 Programs provide team members with ongoing coaching, and training that emphasizes values, principles, and essential elements of Wraparound.

ADM.4.3 Families are included as trainers and co-trainers. Children, youth, and families with Wraparound experience are part of the training team.

ADM.4.4 The program helps parents become informed advocates for their children and youth. Families are offered training in their roles as active, informed decision-makers for and with their children and youth.

ADM.5 EVALUATION AND OUTCOMES

Evaluative functions are used to set measurable targets for the project's operation and to use those targets to test the effectiveness and efficiency of the services and supports being developed. In addition, evaluative information should also be used to determine the degree to which ongoing practice remains faithful to the original model and to incorporate ongoing innovations into the continuous improvement of that model.

This section focuses on collecting, managing, and using information to improve individual and organizational performance. The evaluation and outcomes framework for these standards emphasizes best Wraparound service strategies, functional outcomes, child, youth, family, and system satisfaction indicators, and cost. Inherent in these standards is a belief that active involvement of families, community members, public agency staff, and direct service staff in the complete quality improvement cycle is critical to accountability and quality service implementation and redesign.

ADM.5.1 Children, youth, families, stakeholders, and staff are involved in the evaluation process to inform and improve practice.

ADM.5.2 An evaluation plan supports the ongoing collection, analysis, and reporting of data on:

- Process indicators of quality
- Outcomes
- Satisfaction
- Cost effectiveness

ADM. 5.3 The program's evaluation plan conforms to the California Wraparound Advisory Committee recommendations.

Glossary

California Wraparound	An intensive, individualized, strengths-based care planning and services management process. The Wraparound process aims to achieve positive outcomes by providing a structured, creative, and individualized set of strategies that result in plans and services that are effective and relevant to the child, youth, and family.
Cost Savings	Unspent assistance payment funds that would have been spent to place a child in a more restrictive setting had Wraparound not been available.
Family Engagement	A strengths-based approach to partnering with families in making decisions, setting goals, and achieving desired outcomes. The goals are intended to ensure children, youth, and families are active and influential participants in identifying their needs, and finding solutions to their unique and very personal issues and concerns.
Family Voice and Choice	Child, youth, and family perspectives are intentionally elicited and prioritized during all phases of the Wraparound process. Planning is grounded in family members' perspectives, and the team strives to provide options and choices such that the plan reflects family values and preferences.
Family-Centered Practice	A way of working with families, both formally and informally across service systems to enhance their capacity to care for and protect their children. The practice focuses on children's safety and needs within the context of their communities and builds on families' strengths to achieve optimal outcomes. Families are defined broadly to include birth, blended, kinship, foster, and adoptive families.
Flexible Funds	Money available to each child and family team to meet needs identified in the child and family plan. Funds can be used for nontraditional purposes. Flexible funds are supported by written policies that address how funds are accessed, tracked, and managed, and include a process for accessing funds quickly for emergencies.

Child and Family Plan	A plan tailored to each child, youth, and family based on their specific needs and goals. The plan should be strengths-based, needs-driven, and culturally relevant to the family. The plan should identify specific, incremental steps that move the child, youth, and family toward their specific goals and away from involvement with child welfare or probation agencies. The roles and responsibilities of each team member should be identified in the plan. The plan should address needs across life domains, and include strategies to meet the needs.
Life Domains	Aspects or areas of a person's life that may be addressed in the child and family plan. Life domains include safety, family, a place to live, school, work, emotional well-being, culture, spiritual beliefs, social/fun, legal, medical health, mental health, developmental health, finances, relationships, and independent living skills.
Natural Supports	Individuals and resources who are not connected with formal systems and are accessible to a child, youth, and family through normal means; i.e., friends, neighbors, relatives, community groups, and others. The child and family team actively seeks out and encourages the use of natural supports in the Wraparound process, and draws from family members' own networks of interpersonal and community relationships.
Team Meeting	A meeting where planning occurs, decisions are made, and celebrations are held.
Child and Family Team	A group of people including the child, youth, and family, who have specific roles and responsibilities, and work together to achieve positive outcomes, including but not limited to transition out of the child welfare or probation system. The team is an integral part of Wraparound.
Teaming	The collaborative process that the team uses to coordinate and communicate their work.
Transition	The process of moving from formal services and supports to informal supports.