



OVERVIEW

The California Child Welfare Co-Investment Partnership is a collaboration of state agencies, foundations and other nonprofit organizations that seek to improve the lives of children and families who are in or are at risk of entering the state's child welfare system.

Founded in 2006, the Partnership is based on the premise that funding and support for child welfare programs that serve California's vulnerable children and families must be coordinated and leveraged to have the greatest possible impact. This has never been truer than it is today – a time when we face finite resources and an increased emphasis on outcomes and accountability.

Our public-private partnership includes eight partner organizations that collectively invest more than \$2 billion in the state's child welfare system. In addition, more than 40 organizations serve on our Advisory Committee.

Partners include the California Department of Social Services; the County Welfare Directors Association of California; the Administrative Office of the Courts; and private philanthropic foundations including the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs, Stuart Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Staff support is provided by the Child and Family Policy Institute of California.

Our Goal

The Partnership strives to ensure a coordinated, collaborative approach to the investments needed to improve the child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency and well-being. Focusing on infrastructure, program improvements and policy, we recognize the hard work of collaboration – and how difficult it can be to move a complex and diverse child welfare field in a unified direction. Perhaps because of this, we seek all the more to work together in ways that truly support the children and families served by our collective agencies and organizations.

Our Principles

Five principles guide our work:

- Investing in and helping to develop innovative local programs and practices is an important first step in system-wide change.
- Creating a shared vision and aligning investment priorities helps to more successfully leverage and maximize available child welfare resources.
- By closely tracking local advances, practices that improve outcomes for children and families can be identified and taken to scale.
- Youth and parent involvement are essential to our work to improve the child welfare system.
- Child welfare agencies cannot do it alone – public and community partners are vital to sustained improvement.



What We Do

The Partnership works to improve child welfare outcomes in three ways:

- **We promote strategic approaches** – by identifying and seeding promising ideas, monitoring outcomes, and advocating for resources to sustain and spread proven strategies.
- **We champion key investments** – by collaborating with child welfare investors and other key stakeholders on statewide investments.
- **We inform policymakers** – by providing key decision makers and the public with information they need to ensure that public policies support promising practices.

The Partnership's collaborative and coordinated approach offers an opportunity to leverage investments and support an array of projects ranging from a transformational project on Independent Living Programs and Racial Disproportionality to practices that enhance permanency and mental health. We also focus on issues that address kinship and transitioning youth. Our investments contribute to the widely successful Family to Family initiative and California Connected by 25 Initiative.

Priorities

The Partners set priorities for strategic investment in consultation with their Advisory Committee, reviewing the wide range of child welfare improvement strategies to determine policy priorities for the coming year, and then work with the Advisory Committee to identify the specific activities that are needed.

Priorities in 2009 include:

- **Permanent Connections for Children and Youth** – establish statewide leadership, training and support for permanency practices that support family connections and ensure each foster youth has love, a sense of belonging, and parent-like support and guidance for a lifetime.
- **Foster Family Recruitment, Development and Support** – increase state and local capacity for assessment, recruitment and support of caregivers who are able to meet the individual needs of foster children and youth and provide them with safe, stable and permanent homes.
- **Foster Youth Education Supports** – increase the ability of the child welfare and education systems to ensure each foster child and youth receives the preparation and support needed to succeed in school and to pursue postsecondary education and career pathways by informing and engaging leaders and stakeholders on targeted activities across both systems.
- **Connecting Mental Health and Child Welfare** – create opportunities for leaders and others in the child welfare and public mental health systems to engage in collaborative activities that will improve the lives of children and families.
- **Program Evaluation** – collect and disseminate information and create opportunities for key stakeholders and partners to guide the development of an informative evaluation process that would support child welfare system improvement efforts and investments.

For more information, please visit our Web site at www.co-invest.org or contact us at info@co-invest.org.