

# Family Resource Center FY 22-23 Budget Request

## Talking Points

This proposal is cosponsored by the Child Abuse Prevention Center (CAP Center), California Family Resource Association (CFRA) and California Alliance of Child & Family Services (CA Alliance)

The budget proposal requests \$40M ongoing beginning in FY 22-23 to stabilize and strengthen Family Resource Centers (FRC) in providing comprehensive, cost effective and culturally responsive support to children and families who are some of the most marginalized in our communities, who have been hit particularly hard amid the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic fallout. With additional funding, FRCs can connect families to underutilized benefits such as CalWORKS, Cal Fresh and others. In addition, they can be vital community navigators for CalAIM. Additionally, the funding will allow for an on-line referral process statewide allowing county agencies the ability to automatically refer resource families and particularly kinship care providers.

The funding would be administered by the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) within the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), which proactively included FRCs throughout the state plan understanding that FRCs will be critical to the implementation of FFPSA particularly with the community pathway.

### **Who Are FRCs?**

- The CAP Center and CFRA worked with the Legislature and Administration in 2019 to recognize and formalize FRCs in California law under SB 436 (Hurtado, 2019), Welfare & Institutions Code Section 18951(g)
- Embedded in the community for nearly 30 years, FRCs serve as trusted partners, creating conduits for all levels of government to implement essential programs including mental health services, housing and disaster supports, CalFresh, CalWORKS, Covered California, technology enabling children to engage in distance learning, and poverty alleviation programs such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit.
- Describe **your** FRC – who are you, where are you located, who do you serve, what programs/services do you offer, why is this funding so important to your FRC and community?
- FRCs have stepped up and responded to the state's needs often without additional funding, or at most with time-limited, program-specific funds (Affordable Care Act, DACA, Earned Income Tax Credit, disaster support such as fires, providing access to internet, and now working to increase access to the Child Tax Credit).
- Our approximately 500 FRCs serve around 600,000 individuals each year, with interventions that are both cost effective and culturally responsive
- FRCs work helps to ease the stressors in the home and build resiliency in both children and parents, reducing the prevalence of child abuse and neglect and the need for referrals to Child Protective Services and entry into the Child Welfare and Foster Care Systems

### **How effective are FRCs?**

- Investments in FRCs have shown reduced referrals to CPS, reduced child abuse & neglect, leveraging of federal funding (e.g., FFPSA, Medi-Cal, American Recovery Act, Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention, community development funds, etc.)
  - According to Safe & Sound in partnership with UC Berkeley, Total economic burden on

- CA communities for lifetime costs of survivors of child maltreatment in 2020<sup>1</sup> was \$23.9B
- If only half of the money spent on the repercussions was redirected to prevention, child maltreatment would be reduced by almost 50 percent
- Casey Family Programs – *“there is reason to believe that FRCs have been, and can be, instrumental in increasing protective factors and supporting children’s safety through family support and strengthening. Moreover, if the findings from some of the most promising studies can be replicated, there is no better time than the present to increase the literature on FRCs and make a deep investment in them.”*<sup>2</sup>
- Casey Family Programs highlighted a 45% reduction in cases of child abuse and neglect in Alachua County, Florida through FRCs
- 2021 OMNI Institute study of return on investment at the Westminster Family Resource Center in Orange County, California found direct child welfare savings of \$3.65 for every \$1.00 spent on prevention services through the FRC.<sup>3</sup>
- An external evaluation of the Birth and Beyond program in Sacramento found that comprehensive home visiting services provided through a network of FRCs reduced the risk of substantiated child abuse and neglect complaints in participating families.<sup>4</sup>

## **Funding Needs**

- We greatly appreciate the Newsom Administration and Legislature’s recognition of the important support FRCs provide as demonstrated the last two years amid the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling FRCs to continue serving their communities statewide. However, stable funding is critical to preserving this important network as costs rise and needs grow.
- A February 2021 survey of FRCs across the state related to the 2020 COVID-19 Emergency Funding found significant challenges for FRCs including staff stressors (mental health, low pay, long hours, etc.), increased demand for services, and more.
- Funding for the core services, trainings and efforts offered by FRCs across the state are typically short term and inconsistently available across the state through grants and some local funding.
- Unfortunately, our Centers struggle to survive each year, cobbling together the administration of various initiatives to stay afloat. It is imperative to ensure these core services are maintained with stable, consistent funding as FRCs statewide see increases in need and historical funding sources decline or disappear.
- Now is the time to commit to helping California’s most impacted families head-on by supporting stable, operational funding for the FRCs who support *them* everyday.
- We urge your support of this proposal, Assemblymember/Senator. Please tell our budget champions Assemblymember Eloise Reyes and Senator Monique Limon that you support this request! Thank you for your time.

<sup>1</sup> Economics of Child Abuse Report. Safe & Sound. 2020 [Safe & Sound \(safeandsound.org\)](https://safeandsound.org)

<sup>2</sup> Casey Family Programs [Family Resource Centers – Casey Family Programs](https://caseyfamily.org/family-resource-centers)

<sup>3</sup> OMNI Institute (2021). Return on Investment of a Family Resource Center to the Child Welfare System: Westminster Family Resource Center, Orange County, CA. Submitted to National Family Support Network, Washington, D.C.  
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<sup>4</sup> Applied Survey Research (2019) Birth & Beyond 2018-19 Annual Report, Submitted to First 5 Sacramento.