



California Family
Resource Association
Strong Families. Strong Communities.



Family Resource Center Budget Request FY 23-24

The Child Abuse Prevention Center, California Family Resource Association and California Alliance of Child & Family Services request **\$75 million one-time General Fund** in FY 23-24 budget funding of which \$25M is for FY 23-24; \$25M is for FY 24-25; and \$25M is for FY 25-26¹ to enable Family Resource Centers (FRCs) to continue supporting some of California's most marginalized communities, thereby increasing family economic stability and preventing vulnerable children from entering the child welfare system, while state and local planning and implementation of the Families First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) advances. This funding would fulfill a need recognized last year by the Assembly and State Senate, with this year's request set to match what was included in the FY 22-23 Joint Legislative Budget Proposal for FY 23-24, with accommodation for an additional two years to ensure a stable and strengthened FRC network – a network critical to the viability and stability of the state's safety net for children and families.

How would the requested funding be used?

Direct service support to Children & Families through investment in Family Resource Centers \$67,500,000 (\$22.5M in FY 23-24; \$22.5M in FY 24-25; \$22.5M in FY 25-26) (90%)

- Funding for approximately 200 Family Resource Centers and FRC networks throughout the state, reaching and serving over ~250,000+ children and families over three years
 - o *Note: There are currently approximately 500 Family Resource Centers statewide, but in order to ensure sufficient impact the request is to fund an estimated 200 FRCs each year.
- FFPSA, with 48 counties currently developing plans for implementation in early 2023, will rely on Community Based and FRC providers. These organizations will serve as the community pathway and direct service vehicles of Title-IV-E prevention efforts, screening and assessing families and providing Evidence Based interventions to build family strengths and prevent entry into the child welfare system. During implementation, we must ensure the preservation of the delivery system and family safety net. These funds will provide interim support to ensure the stability of organizations critical to success of this program serving at-risk children and families as planning and implementation advances.
- Funding would help ensure FRCs may continue delivering services and/or expand activities and opportunities within the communities where they are already trusted partners, to help meet the growing demand for services such as access to mental healthcare, public benefit system navigation.
- Supports offered by FRCs reduce child abuse and neglect in communities and ensure significant cost avoidance through the reduction of referrals to Child Protective Services and subsequent mandated programming and services, netting Child Welfare Systems a 365% return on investment for every dollar spent²
 - o This proven return on investment is vital to California's economic health given the \$23.9B total economic burden incurred by CA communities for the lifetime costs of

¹ Aligned to the similar funding approach for the FY22-23 Adult Education Healthcare Vocational Education Funding

² 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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survivors of child maltreatment in the year 2020³ alone

- Data collection on outcomes related to the prevention of child abuse and neglect, navigation of economic supports, and related returns investment of public dollars.

Administration, Support, Accountability & Reporting

\$7,500,000 (\$2.5M in FY 23-24; \$2.5M in FY 24-25; \$2.5M in FY 25-26) (10%)

Building on the experience of administering COVID-Relief funds for FRCs, these costs will include, though not be limited to:

- Documentation of outcomes and impact of funded FRCs
- Development, implementation, and oversight of data systems to ensure accurate and consistent data collection
- Organizational training and technical assistance for administering state funds, strategic planning, and other program management needs
- Fiscal supports and payment processing
- Fiscal oversight, such as audits, record keeping, and budget review
- Standard training for staff and increased access to training for evidence-based programs approved for FFPSA
- Statewide network support such as convenings, online peer connections, templates for program and planning formats
- Operating support to local, county, and regional FRC networks
- Independent evaluation and continuous quality improvement

Total Budget Request

\$75,000,000 in one-time General Fund

This funding would be administered by the Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) within the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

Why do Family Resource Centers need state funding?

California has made historic investments in children and families in the past two years—CalAIM, ACEs Aware, Community Schools, the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative and more. **Yet access to these supports for the most marginalized families often relies on community infrastructure that lacks stable funding for Family Resource Centers (FRCs).**

Over the years, state and local governments have relied upon FRCs to assist with implementation of the Affordable Care Act, DACA, COVID relief efforts, the Earned Income Tax Credit, the Child Tax Credit, emergency and disaster response during fires, housing support, domestic violence and crisis management services, employment and utilities assistance, isolation needs, providing access the internet to enable distance learning and for the distribution of basic survival items such as food, diapers and hygiene products. **As trusted, culturally appropriate, human-touch partners for vulnerable families, FRCs address needs proactively, preventing intervention from the child welfare and criminal justice systems, and promoting community well-being.**

But all too often, those FRCs serve as an unrecognized element of community development and social intervention in our social service system of care – with each FRC scrambling to resecure its own existence each year and a lack of state and local funding being provided to cover FRC engagement as navigators to help children and families access key programs and supports.

In many cases, the patchwork of government and private grants upon which FRCs rely are narrowly defined and time-limited. In fact, stable, ongoing funding is rarely available for those features of FRCs that make them such trusted community partners, including their welcoming environments, availability

³ Economics of Child Abuse Report. Safe & Sound. 2020 [Safe & Sound \(safeandsound.org\)](https://www.safeandsound.org)

to help all families and individuals, open-ended drop-in supports and parent leadership development programs.

Through their unique and holistic blend of parent education, peer connections, material supports, brokering of public benefits, leadership development, and whatever else is needed by a community, FRCs hold immense potential for turning the tides on family economic stress and childhood trauma.

Furthermore, funding prevention through FRCs is not only good for California’s children and families, but doing so also makes economic sense. The cumulative economic impact in California for the 56,684 substantiated survivors of child maltreatment and 100 child fatalities in 2021 added up to a **\$22.6 billion**, and studies have shown that every dollar spent on prevention services through FRCs bring back a 365% return on investment to the child welfare system.

A 2022 report by Safe & Sound summed up the situation, stating that *“We are in the midst of a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reimagine the child welfare system based on a number of transformative new policies, newly available resources, and a significant shift in attitudes held by policymakers and the public.”*

Now is the time for the state of California to sustain this essential strand in our state’s safety net by providing stable funding for Family Resource Centers and their services to children and families until FFPSA is fully implemented and funding to support FRCs as a critical pathway under the state plan is realized.

What are Family Resource Centers?

Family Resource Centers as defined by Welfare & Institutions Code Section 18951(g)⁴, are a key community pathway for strengthening families via family-centered, community-based, and culturally sensitive supports that include cross-system collaboration as a means to prevent child abuse and neglect.

More specifically, FRCs play a vital role in communities, serving as trusted partners that connect children and families to resources and opportunities that help lessen everyday stressors. FRCs are embedded in underserved communities and operate at the neighborhood level, with leadership, staff, and volunteers reflective of the local community.

According to Casey Family Programs, *“FRCs are distinct in that they are uniquely community-focused, are driven by family needs, and offer a multitude of programs and resources...FRCs also are designed to help stabilize families before a crisis reaches a level requiring CPS intervention, or a child’s placement in out-of-home care.”*⁵

And according to a report commissioned by the California Department of Social Services’ Office of Child Abuse Prevention, *“FRCs go beyond traditional social service entities by taking on broad community change efforts. In an entrepreneurial spirit, FRCs embrace an asset development approach to community change, honoring community strengths while addressing very real needs and/or social injustices through resident engagement.”*⁶

Are Family Resource Centers effective?

⁴ SB 436 (Hurtado, 2019), Welfare & Institutions Code Section 18951(g)

(g) “Family resource center” means an entity providing family-centered and family-strengthening services that are embedded in communities, culturally sensitive, and include cross-system collaboration to assist in transforming families and communities through reciprocity and asset development based on impact-driven and evidence-informed approaches with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect and strengthening children and families. A family resource center may be located in, or administered by, different entities, including, but not limited to, a local educational agency, a community resource center, or a neighborhood resource center.

⁵ Casey Family Programs <https://www.casey.org/family-resource-centers/>

⁶ Citation: J. Sherman & Y. McQuaid (2017) *Family Resource Centers: Vehicles for Change, Volume II*; the California Office of Child Abuse Prevention.

Findings from Casey Family Programs on the effectiveness of FRCs included in communities throughout the country:

- 45% reduction in cases of child abuse and neglect
- Significantly lower rates of child maltreatment investigations in communities with FRCs
- Statistically significant gains in family self-sufficiency

In addition to the Casey Family Programs research, other recent findings for FRCs include:

- A September 2021 study at the Westminster Family Resource Center in Orange County, California, finding direct child welfare savings of \$3.65 for every \$1.00 spent on prevention services through the FRC.⁷
- A 2020/21 study of FRC supports to families at Pathways to Hope for Children in Shasta County, finding that families demonstrated statistically significant increases in parent hope, affect, and flourishing, and approximately 90% of parents made progress towards their identified goals and reported high levels of hope.
- An external evaluation of the Birth and Beyond program in Sacramento, finding that comprehensive home visiting services provided through a network of FRCs reduced the risk of substantiated child abuse and neglect complaints in participating families.⁸
- An analysis showing that for every \$1.00 invested in the Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers, the State of Alabama receives \$4.70 of immediate and long-term financial benefits⁹
- A 2018 report by FRC providers UpValley Family Services and On the Move, showing how their close connections allowed them to quickly identify families in need, mobilize community resources and logistics, and provide material support in the wake of the 2017 fire in Napa Valley.

Family Resource Centers also support family economic well-being and success, through access to public benefits, emergency assistance, and support in securing jobs. Along with the obvious benefit to communities and the state economy, an increasing body of evidence shows that these economic supports play a pivotal role in child abuse prevention. As the Casey Family Programs report concluded, “*there is no better time than the present to increase the literature on FRCs and make a deep investment in them.*”¹⁰ Further, if the state intends for FRCs to be a viable community pathway for FPPSA, it is critical to avoid further erosion of the FRC network statewide.

Have Family Resource Centers ever successfully utilized state funding?

Governor Newsom and the Legislature allocated funding in FY 20/21 and FY 21/22 budget cycles for Family Resource Centers to provide critically needed aid for children and families amid the challenges and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The one-time COVID-19 focused allocations are summarized below.

COVID-19 FRC Emergency Funding April – June 2020

\$2,819,563¹¹

- 10 weeks to expend funds amid onset of the pandemic (April 13 – June 30)
- Funding distributed via Notice of Funding Opportunity in conjunction with OCAP / CDSS
- 349 FRCs received funding in 54 of 58 counties
- 117,569 individuals served

⁷ 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.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6149fd6b8447df72f4c3c18f/v/616466186857d74d8627f316/1633969690479/Westminster+Family+Resource+Center+Child+Welfare+Return+on+Investment+Technical+Appendix+Revised+Figure-Oct+2021.pdf>

⁸ Applied Survey Research (2019) Birth & Beyond 2018-19 Annual Report, Submitted to First 5 Sacramento.

⁹ Community Services Analysis Company LLC. (2014). *Alabama Network of Family Resource Centers: Social Return on Investment Analysis*. Retrieved from <http://csaco.org/files/103503730.pdf>

¹⁰ Casey Family Programs [Family Resource Centers – Casey Family Programs](#)

¹¹ CAP Center & CFRA Requested Funding was \$6.3M to serve over 103,000 individuals

- Included 6,401 foster family beneficiaries and 2,756 Indian Tribe beneficiaries
- Comprehensive services provided for, on average, \$24 per individual¹²

COVID-19 Response Funding September 2021-June 2023

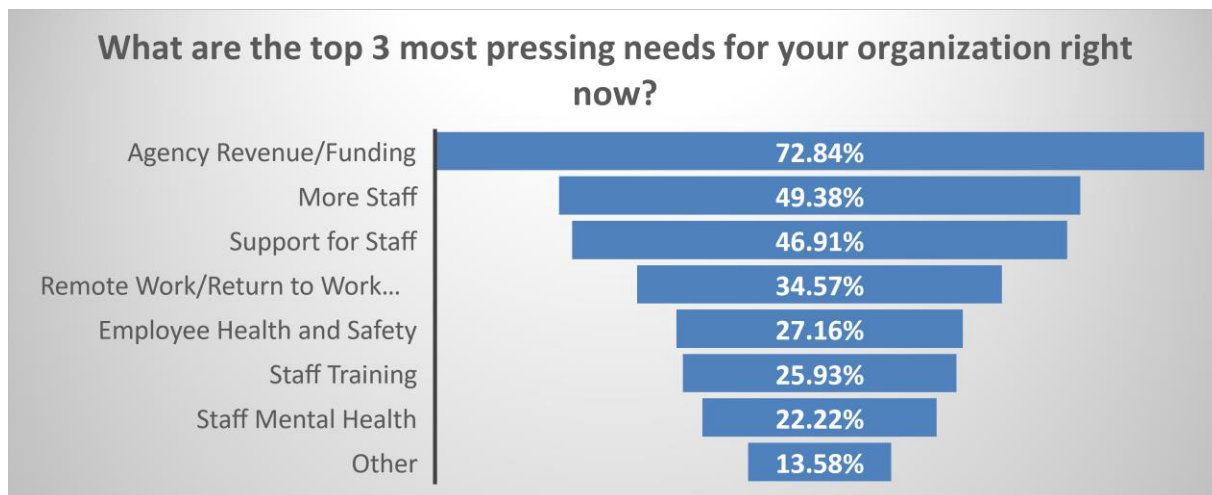
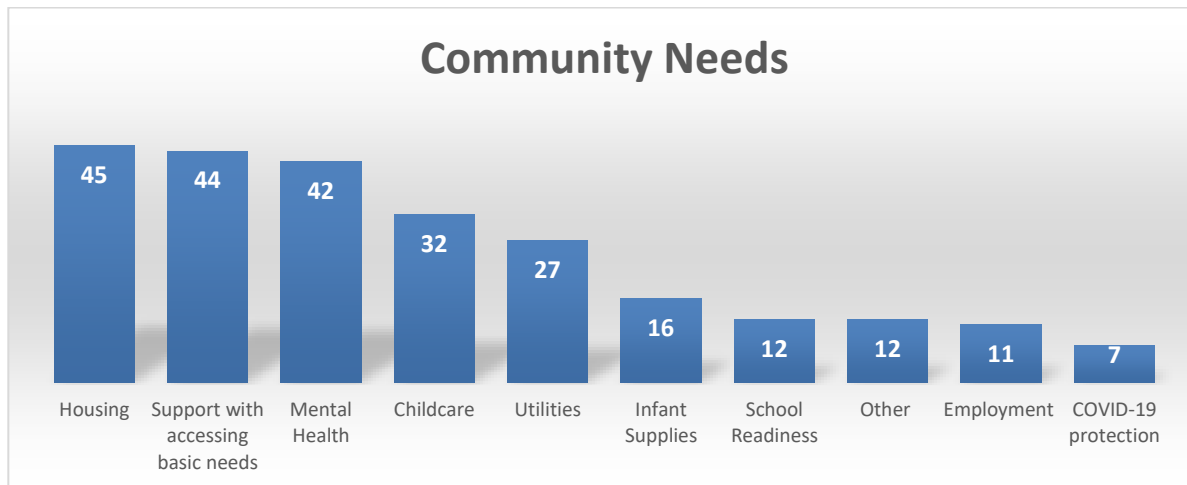
\$13,000,000¹³

- Notice of Funding Opportunity for FRC COVID-19 Relief Funds released July 27th
- 386 FRCs through 99 participating organizations statewide
- Services to 265,000 individuals through 53 counties.
- A survey of FRCs providing COVID relief revealed significant challenges, including staff stressors (mental health, low pay, long hours, etc.), increased demand for services, etc.

What would Family Resource Centers do with state funding?

A survey of the FRCs statewide conducted by the California Family Resource Association provides important information about the consequences for families and communities due to the loss of COVID Relief funding for FRCs with no replacement in the State budget. Impacts include:

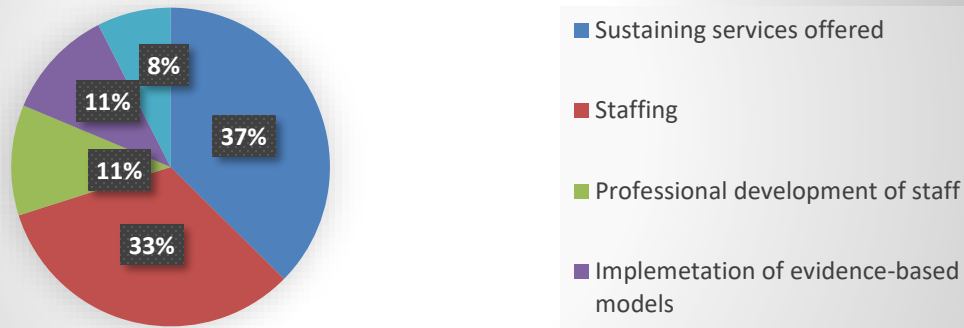
- A decrease in the number of services and support offered to the community.
- Therefore, fewer families would get the basic needs that they need the most.
- The most compelling needs of FRC communities included support with housing (87%), accessing basic needs (85%), mental health (81%), childcare (62%), and utilities (52%).



¹² Note: Doesn't account for braiding the COVID-19 funding with funding and support from other services, agencies

¹³ FY 21-22 CAP Center & CFRA Requested Funding was \$33M

Organization Needs



Respondents provided vivid detail about the challenges of insecure funding, including the following testimonial: *“It’s frustrating and difficult to plan to expand programming to serve the ever-changing needs of our community when there is no funding to support the amazing work of FRCs. We will have to cut staff which means a decrease in services for families and an increase in stress and burnout in other staff that must carry portions of the work as a result.”*

Despite these challenges, one FRC leader in Mariposa County recently described the following in regard to their response to the 2022 Ash Fire: *“It’s going to be a long road for the 130+ displaced families, but we continue to work with them one-on-one to best serve them during this trying time.”*

How would disadvantaged California families benefit by the state funding Family Resource Centers?

Reduced Child Abuse and Entries into Child Welfare

Funding for FRCs can stabilize their impact in child abuse prevention, as described above, through activities and opportunities that address the research-informed Family Protective Factors¹⁴, such as:

- **Attachment:** pre-natal supports, Mommy and Me classes, home visiting
- **Parental Resilience:** service brokering, goal-driven case management
- **Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development:** parenting classes, call-in lines
- **Social & Emotional Competence of Children:** early education, play groups, therapy
- **Parental Social Supports:** support groups, parent leadership development, civic engagement
- **Concrete Support in Times of Need:** drop-in material assistance, access to public benefits

Increased Family Economic Stability

With poverty being a major driver of family stress, economic and concrete supports have been found to reduce the risk of child abuse by helping families to address basic needs and provide environments for children to thrive¹⁵. With resources for their core services, FRCs can provide a critical link for families to access such support, acting as a trusted broker, addressing linguistic and cultural barriers, and offering as-needed drop-in assistance. Further, reduced familial stress is also correlated to reduction in child abuse and domestic violence.

Proposed Trailer Bill Language

¹⁴ Friends. (2021). *Protective factors surveys*. [Protective Factors Surveys | Friends NRC](#)

¹⁵ Weiner, D. A., Anderson, C., & Thomas, K. (2021). *System transformation to support child and family well-being: The central role of economic and concrete supports*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

- a) \$75,000,000 shall be made available annually to the State Department of Social Services to fund grants to Family Resource Centers, as defined in WIC 18951(g), to act as navigators for children and families seeking access to state and local programs and services, and to provide comprehensive, cost-effective, and culturally responsive support and services to children and families who are in need and at risk of intervention. Funding provided shall supplement, and not supplant, federal, state, or local supports and services already available to children and families. The department shall provide an update on uses of the funds to the Legislature.
- b) Provided funding may be used for, but is not limited to, the following:
- (1) Services to families, including, but not limited to:
 - a. **General Services:** Families and individuals receive referrals, basic needs assistance, such as staffing for drop-in and call-in supports to families in need.
 - b. **Center Services:** Families and individuals participate in programs and services at the FRC such as parenting education, workshops, and emergency assistance with housing and utilities. May include:
 - i. Outreach, enhanced referral and navigation for public benefits and emergency support program access, including, but not limited to, CalFresh, CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, and the earned income child tax credits,
 - ii. parent peer supports,
 - iii. cultural activities,
 - iv. leadership development and civic engagement,
 - v. staffing and other resources for providing child supervision supports, meals, and incentives for parents and caregivers attending groups and services in the family resource center
 - c. **FRC Stability:** the continued operation of accessible, culturally appropriate, neighborhood-based services and supports, including expenses such as:
 - i. Facilities improvements to increase program accessibility and cultural appropriateness.
 - ii. Startup of new programs within FRCs, including evidenced-based programs
 - iii. Parent stipends for participation in agency governing boards, advisory committees, external collaborative or policy boards, or other civic engagement and leadership opportunities.
 - iv. Strategic planning & continuous quality improvement.
 - v. Translation and interpretation costs
 - (2) Documentation of FRC impact through a cohort of more intensively funded FRCs that provide the additional services outlined above:
 - a. **Family Development Services:** Families work with staff at the FRC to set goals and track progress towards goals through case management.
 - b. **Impact Evaluation:** FRC engagement in statewide data collection on service outcomes (e.g., standardized measures of family well-being, reduced entry into child welfare, increased access to public benefits, positive impacts on social determinants of health & protective factors)
 - (3) Matching Funds for federal, county, local, or private funding sources.
 - (4) Up to 10% of these funds will be allocated to a statewide support infrastructure that shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a. Contracting & Accounting for 200 FRCs

- b. Data collection, oversight, and reporting
 - c. Standards review for FRC programs
 - d. Training & technical assistance
 - e. Developing a database and consistent data collection
 - f. Independent evaluation of overall FRC funding program
 - g. Operational support for local, county, and regional FRC networks
 - h. Startup for new FRCs.
 - i. Statewide network support, convening, and leadership development, such as:
 - i. Member leadership development.
 - ii. Regional convenings of FRCs and networks.
 - iii. Affinity groups such as rural FRCs, Tribes, etc.
 - iv. State FRC Conference
 - v. Webinars
- c) Evaluation of provided services includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- (1) General Services: Total numbers served.
 - (2) Center Services: Demographics, screening, referrals, and participation data.
 - (3) Family Development Services: Demographics, screening, referrals, and goal progress data, using validated measures of family supportive resources, protective factors, hope, and readiness for change. (e.g., Protective Factors Survey 2, HOPE Survey, CO Family Support Assessment 2.0 (CFSA 2.0)).
 - (4) For a selected Impact Cohort: Return on investment, impact on child welfare involvement, family economic security, access to public benefits
 - (5) The National Standards for Family Strengthening and Support.

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The Child Abuse Prevention Center is a state and national training, education, research and resource center dedicated to strengthening children, families and communities.

The California Family Resource Association is a statewide membership association of FRCs and FRC Networks that work together to bring children, families and communities to the forefront of policymaking in California.

The California Alliance of Child and Family Services is a statewide membership organization representing community-based organizations serving children and families through prevention services, behavioral health, foster care and juvenile justice.