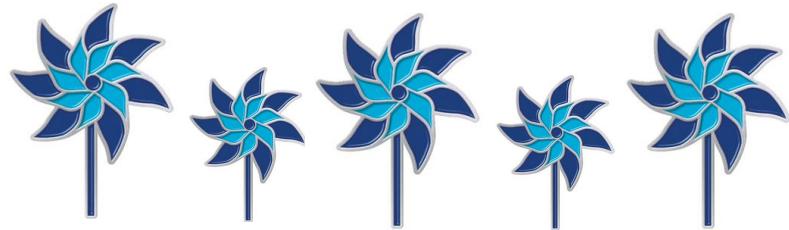


A FRAMEWORK FOR THE PREVENTION OF CHILD MALTREATMENT*



Child abuse and neglect are serious problems that can have lasting harmful effects. The vision of the Office of Child Abuse Prevention is that no child suffers from abuse or neglect.

LEVELS OF PREVENTION



PRIMARY PREVENTION

These activities are directed at the general population to strengthen communities and improve child well-being by focusing on the social determinants of health, defined as the conditions into which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life.



SECONDARY PREVENTION

These activities are offered to populations that have one or more risk factors associated with child maltreatment, such as poverty, parental substance abuse, young parental age, parental mental health concerns, exposure to violence, and parental or child disabilities. Programs seek to provide access to services and resources within communities having a high incidence of any or all of these risk factors, utilizing data.



TERTIARY PREVENTION

These activities focus on families where maltreatment has already occurred and seek to reduce the negative consequences of the maltreatment and to prevent its recurrence. These services provide supports and resources to children and families involved in the child welfare system to prevent re-entry and recurrence.

STRATEGIES



PRIMARY PREVENTION

These activities seek to raise the awareness of the general public, business leaders, educators, service providers, and decision-makers about the scope and problems associated with child maltreatment, the conditions that might contribute to the issue and work collaboratively to improve conditions for overall child well-being. Initiatives may include:

- Strategies to reduce poverty and improve economic stability.
- Strategies to improve school readiness.
- Strategies to increase family friendly work environments.
- Strategies to increase social connections within the community.
- Strategies to improve health and access to healthcare.
- Strategies to improve neighborhood safety and play areas for children.
- Communication strategies for education, engagement, and outreach.



SECONDARY PREVENTION

These services and resources strengthen individuals and families by building protective factors, which are conditions or attributes in individuals, families and communities that mitigate or eliminate risk. Programs and services may include:

- Accessible family resource centers that offer information and referral services to families living in low-income areas.
- Parent education programs located in high schools with a focus on teen parents, or located within substance abuse treatment programs with a focus on mothers and families with young children.
- Home visiting programs that provide support and assistance to expecting and new mothers.
- Respite care for families that have children with special needs.
- Family-centered substance abuse treatment services.
- Differential response programs.



TERtiARY PREVENTION

These prevention programs may include services such as:

- Intensive family preservation services with trained mental health counselors that are available to families 24 hours per day for a short period of time (e.g. 6 to 8 weeks).
- Parent mentor programs with stable, non-abusive families acting as "role models" and providing support to families in crisis.
- Parent support groups that help parents transform negative practices and beliefs into positive parenting behaviors and attitudes.
- Mental health services for children and families affected by maltreatment to improve family communication and functioning.



OFFICE OF
CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION

California Department of Social Services

* Content obtained and adapted from the Child Welfare Information Gateway, a service of the Children's Bureau