

California Partners for Permanency
Reducing Long-Term Foster Care

Justice for All: A Culturally Responsive Approach to Practice and System Changes Involving Community and Tribal Partners

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Beyond the Bench, 12/2/13
 Anaheim, CA

Unprecedented Federal Initiative to Reduce Long Term Foster Care

Federal Intent:

- *Build the evidence base* for innovative permanency interventions
- *Improve permanency outcomes* and enhance well-being for particular groups of children and youth experiencing the most serious barriers to permanency

PII: Permanency Innovations Initiative

- Presidential Initiative
- 6 Grantees Nationwide (2 in California!)
 - CDSS & 4 Counties - CAPP
 - LA Gay and Lesbian Center - RISE
- Desired Outcomes:
 - Reduce long-term foster care
 - Improve child wellbeing

CA Partners for Permanency (CAPP) Participating Counties

- o Fresno
- o Humboldt
- o Los Angeles
- o Santa Clara



The Need

- Over 60,000 children in CA foster care
- African American children in foster care at more than 4 times their rate in the child population
- American Indian children in foster care at nearly 3 times their rate in the child population
- Foster care outcomes are worse for African American and American Indian youth:
 - o They remain in foster care longer
 - o They are less likely to be reunified with their families

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What's the project doing?

Developing and testing a *Practice Model* for child welfare agencies and their partners to use in working with children, youth and families to improve outcomes and address disparities.

The Practice Model includes:

- o **Theoretical framework**
- o **Values and principles**
- o **Essential front-line practices**
- o **Organizational and system capacity**

CAPP Theoretical Framework

- Broad Social, Racial and Historical factors have impacted the lives of African American and American Indian families
- The history of racism and discrimination in our communities has impacted our institutions and contributed to disparities in outcomes
- Partnerships with supportive communities and tribes are essential to understand and meet the needs of their children and families

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Child and Family Practice Model Values & Principles

- Power of Family
- Healing
- Community & Collaboration
- Honesty, Transparency & Trust
- Safety
- Fairness & Equity
- Empowerment
- Accountability and Results

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Child and Family Practice Model Front Line Practice Approach

Includes 4 interdependent *Front Line Practices*:

- ❖ Exploration and Engagement
- ❖ Power of Family
- ❖ Circle of Support
- ❖ Healing Trauma

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Child and Family Practice Model

Front Line Practice Approach

Includes **8 Core Elements** that are essential in interactions with children and families:

- Inquiry
- Engagement
- Self-advocacy
- Advocacy
- Well-being Partnerships
- Recovery, Safety and Wellbeing
- Teaming
- Shared Commitment and Accountability

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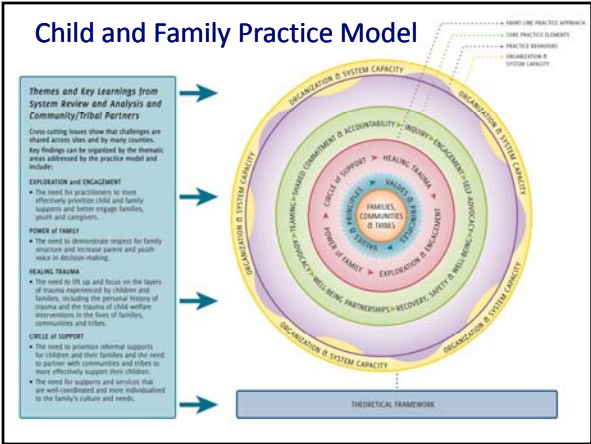
Child and Family Practice Model

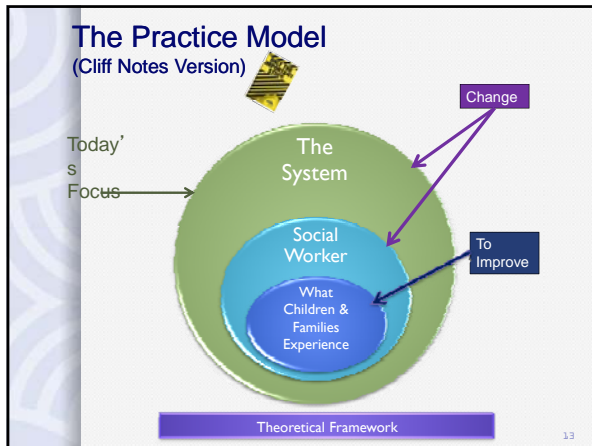
Front Line Practice Approach

Includes **23 Practice Behaviors**:

Behaviorally specific actions for agency staff and partners to consistently and effectively use in their interactions with children and families.

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System Review and Analysis

Commitment to Local Improvement

System Reviews (Institutional Analyses):

- Conducted in **partnership** with local communities and Tribes
- Develop **relationships first** and forge **common agreements** about how to be together
- **Identify system barriers** to improved outcomes for children and families
- Result in **local action plans** to address the system barriers identified

Key findings have informed the development of the CAPP Child and Family Practice Model.



Partnership
Courts, Child Welfare, Communities and Tribes



Partnership
Relationships

- Commitment
- Accessibility, Reaching Out
- Open & Honest Conversations
- Acknowledgement
- Seeing Results
- Giving Validity to Barriers & Challenges

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Partnership
Courts, Child Welfare, Communities and Tribes

How Did You Get Started?

- Find Space and Time to Come Together and Build Relationships
- Understand and Interpret Local Data Together
- Establish Shared Goals and Outcomes
- Explore System Barriers to Improved Outcomes for Local Children and Families
- Craft Solutions and Strategies Together

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It takes time, patience, dedication and determination to realize lasting benefits.



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**Partnership
Courts, Child Welfare, Communities and Tribes**

How did you stay in the work together when things got tough?

- Deepen focus on partner relationships; slow down and reflect together; recognize it may get worse before it gets better.
- Take time to acknowledge and work through historical issues of anger and mistrust and consider how current system interactions may be contributing.
- Recognize that problems are complex, the process is messy and you don't have all the answers – be humble, learn from others and craft solutions together.
- Reaffirm the purpose of the partnership and what each partner can and is doing to reach shared goals and outcomes.

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**Partnership
Courts, Child Welfare, Communities and Tribes**

What are important lessons learned in partnering with communities and Tribes and incorporating their unique contributions in active system change efforts to improve child and family outcomes?

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Partnership
Courts, Child Welfare, Communities and Tribes

Sunni' s Story



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QUESTIONS?



CAPP Partnership Approach

Community and Tribal Partnerships are Central

- Listening sessions to learn about and begin to address historical trauma and mistrust of systems
- Respecting and incorporating the unique contributions of communities and Tribes
- Collaborative efforts to establish culturally relevant supports and services to meet the needs of children and families

In Summary

- Partner with families, communities and tribes
- Local review to identify system barriers
- Action planning to address system barriers
- Culturally relevant supports and services
- Implementation of a practice model that is culturally responsive and sensitive to trauma
- System alignment to support full and effective use of the practice by all partners



Lasting Change for Children and Families

*"Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success."*

- Henry Ford



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CAPP is a five-year federally funded project to reduce long-term foster care. To learn more, visit www.reducefostercarenow.org or contact Karen Gunderson, CAPP Project Director, at the California Department of Social Services, (916) 651.7395 or karen.gunderson@dss.ca.gov.
