



## Welcome to Re-CAPP!

*Re-CAPP is a new, bi-monthly bulletin intended to provide updates and key information about California Partners for Permanency (CAPP) and its collaborative work to reduce long-term foster care in the state. With the help and hard work of many state, county, community and tribal partners, CAPP is learning, evolving, improving. We hope this issue of Re-CAPP is useful and look forward to our continued work together.*

## THE ART & SCIENCE OF IMPROVING OUTCOMES

### *Using Implementation Science to Reduce Long-Term Foster Care*

CAPP's efforts to reduce long-term foster care and improve the lives of children and families is rooted in implementation science – a body of study and experience that maintains we will be successful if we pay attention not only to child and family practice but also to implementation.

#### **What You Need to Know**

Implementation science maintains that when proven interventions (or practices) are consistently and systematically implemented as intended, outcomes improve for children and families.

The science of implementation needs to be employed so that systems support quality practice and successful services reach and positively impact children and families. Implementation science is applied at all levels of a system, from practitioners in a child welfare agency to the county and state agencies providing child welfare leadership, oversight and policy. Of course implementation does not and cannot occur all at once; it can take two to four years to complete.

#### **CAPP and Implementation Science Intervention = Child and Family Practice Model**

Implementation science is being used by CAPP in a focused effort to reduce long-term foster care. Through a five-year, federally funded project, state, county, community and tribal partners are working together to understand what will be effective in improving outcomes and are focusing on both the intervention

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that is needed as well as the organization and system issues that pose barriers.

#### *How does the CAPP Practice Model fit into things?*

After a year of research, planning and collaboration, CAPP's planned intervention is the development of an integrated model that informs and shifts child and family practice in California. The practice model is a guide for public agencies and their partners to follow in reducing long-term foster care and improving the lives of children, youth and families in the Child Welfare System.

The Child and Family Practice Model will require changes at the practice and organization and system levels. Child and family practice will need to evolve to ensure that services are in line with the practice model and organizations and systems will need to build the capacity and internal structure to support those practices. With an eye toward implementation science, it will be important to build a strong infrastructure at the statewide, regional and local levels to support consistent and effective implementation of the model. Efforts will also need to be informed by local analyses that have identified organizational and system barriers that stand in the way of success.

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## How did we get here?

The critical work of this first planning year was made possible through the collaboration and hard work of CAPP's four early implementing counties (Fresno, Humboldt, Santa Clara and Los Angeles), many state, community and tribal partners, and federal technical assistance advisors. All have provided crucial guidance and direction as CAPP got underway.

## Where can I learn more about implementation science?

CAPP has produced a two-page issue backgrounder on implementation science. Along with other informational materials, it can be found on CAPP's web page. Visit [www.reducefostercarenow.org](http://www.reducefostercarenow.org) to learn more.

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## COMMUNITY AND TRIBAL PARTNERS GUIDE AND CHALLENGE CAPP TO LISTEN AND LEARN

Community and tribal involvement and guidance are critical to reducing long-term foster care and improving the lives of children and families. CAPP's emphasis on community and tribal partnerships in which we learn and create together represents a commitment to not "doing business as usual" – understanding that real change is possible only through collaboration and building on the strengths of the communities and tribes served. African American and tribal representatives are challenging public systems to change the way systems interact with children and families. Our collective work is inspired by the experiences of the families, youth, communities and tribes who are involved and whose voices are clear and effective reminders of what is most important.

*"Being invited to the table as a partner...to pose the problem and create the solutions...is an important step forward."*

**– Youth, African American & Tribal Communities**

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## WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2012

The coming year will be an exciting time as counties, community partners and tribes further prepare for and begin implementation of the practice model. In 2012, CAPP's four early implementing counties and their local system, community and tribal partners will be planning, preparing and organizing to support utilization of the intervention. They will be working together to form county implementation teams, develop training and coaching for staff, and create action plans to address system and organizational changes necessary to support the practice model. The practice model will be tested and adjusted during this period to maximize usability and effectiveness.

As CAPP moves forward with the installation and implementation stages of the practice model and addresses organization and system issues, we will use this publication to share what we are learning, knowing that as we progress together we will continue to evolve and improve.



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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](http://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](mailto:karen.gunderson@dss.ca.gov).