



Los Angeles County Child Care Policy Framework 2011- 2013 Promoting Healthy Children, Strong Families and Vibrant Communities



Executive Summary

The Los Angeles County Child Care Policy Framework (Policy Framework) 2011-2013 reaffirms the commitment of the Board of Supervisors (Board), County departments and community stakeholders to close the gap between what we **know** and what we **do** to support the healthy development of young children, their families, and our communities.

Despite significant budget challenges in the last few years, implementation of the original Child Care Policy Framework, adopted by the Board of Supervisors on January 6, 2009, resulted in significant accomplishments by several departments, a deeper understanding of ongoing challenges and a host of lessons learned; however, much work remains. The Child Care Policy Framework 2011-2013 builds on those successes, shared learning across departments, community-based agencies and clients, and seeks to engage new partners who share the vision of promoting healthy children, strong families, and vibrant communities.

Goals for 2011-13

Goal One: The quality of child development services for children birth to five years of age in Los Angeles County will be improved as the Steps to Excellence Project (STEP) is expanded and support services to STEP participants are intensified.

Strategies: Expand STEP to additional communities, grow STEP's on-site coaching and link STEP participants to County resources to offer families "concrete supports in times of need".

Partners and Commitments: Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP), Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

Goal Two: Utilization of local, State, and Federal child development resources will be maximized. All available resources and policies will help strengthen the child development infrastructure and support the expansion of high quality child development programs that integrate family support, health, mental health and other relevant services.

Strategies: Continue efforts to enlist public and private sector partners to advocate for the maintenance and/or expansion of funding for high quality, comprehensive services that ensure the safety of children and promote school success, strong families and communities; and expand efforts to assure that all available resources are used to benefit families and children.

Partners and Commitments: Chief Executive Office Intergovernmental Relations and External Affairs Branch and external advocacy groups including but not limited to Advancement Project, First 5 LA, Los Angeles County Office of Education - Head Start (LACOE-HS), LAUP, LAUSD, and Preschool California

Goal Three: County departments will work collaboratively with each other and community partners to maximize the utilization of available child development resources, support quality improvements and promote the delivery of integrated services for children and their families.

Strategies: Develop strategies to make the subsidized child development system more accessible to vulnerable children and families in Los Angeles County; convene a forum with after school community-based providers to identify opportunities to increase the enrollment of youth under the supervision of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Probation in safe and educationally enriching activities during non-school hours; convene Child Care Resource and Referral (R&R) Agencies and child development stakeholders

to explore possible collaborative efforts to include child development personnel in Team Decision Making conferences; launch a targeted outreach effort aimed at CalWORKs participants with young children who are experiencing homelessness; promote, among Children's Services Workers, an understanding of the lifelong impacts of early brain development including cognitive, emotional and physical well-being.

Partners and Commitments: County departments (DCFS, Probation, Department of Public Social Services, Parks and Recreation, Library, Los Angeles County Office of Education/Head Start (LACOE/HS)), R&R agencies, LAUP, California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD)-contracted California State Preschool Programs, Long Beach Unified School District Head Start Programs, Regional Centers, Children Today, ICAN (Inter-agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect) Task Force on Pregnant and Parenting Teens, DCFS Pregnant and Parenting Teens Work Group, Child Care Alliance of Los Angeles, University of Southern California-School of Social Work

Goal Four: County departments will work collaboratively with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE), key school districts and community-based child development services to integrate services, thereby supporting effective: a) articulation between child development and kindergarten, including approaches to effectively engage parents in the education of their children; b) design of developmentally appropriate transitional kindergarten programs; and c) identification and/or utilization of new or nontraditional funding for child development services such as, but not limited to, Federal Title 1 funds, to serve special populations.

Strategies: Promote articulation between child development programs and grades K-3, and the establishment of developmentally appropriate transition kindergartens with effective parent engagement practices in school districts throughout the County; support the development of an Educare site in Los Angeles County and promote co-location of County and other family services at the site; engage the CDE/CDD in a dialogue regarding the potential long term impacts of child abuse and neglect and the role of high quality child development services to mitigate those impacts; explore regulatory or legislative remedies to facilitate access to high quality child development services for children determined to be at risk or who have experienced child abuse and/or neglect; and identify and/or access new or nontraditional funding for child development services to serve special populations.

Partners and Commitments: LACOE and other local school districts, LAUSD, R&Rs, Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health

Goal Five: The Chief Executive Office (CEO) will facilitate County department efforts to work internally, across departments, and with community partners, to integrate the Strengthening Families Approach (SFA) and Protective Factors into their work with children, families and communities and engage families in high quality child development services. The CEO, with assistance from the Center for the Study of Social Policy and key local partners, will establish a multidisciplinary SFA learning community designed to support ongoing professional development and SFA projects that are underway or emerging in County departments.

Strategies: Promote the integration of the SFA into County department practices; facilitate collaborative partnerships among community stakeholders and County departments; support departments in accessing child development services for their clients; and work collaboratively to align countywide place-based effort in the promotion of the SFA.

Partners and Commitments: Center for the Study of Social Policy, First 5 LA, LAUP, Los Angeles Partnership for Early Childhood Investment, Education Coordinating Council, County Commissions, CEO Public Information, Cable and Telecommunications

The Los Angeles County Child Care Policy Framework is available in full on the home page of the Office of Child Care website at www.childcare.lacounty.gov or a copy may be requested by telephone at (213) 974-4103.