

Bridging Child Development and Related Service Sectors: A Policy Framework for Los Angeles County

*Our **purpose** is to improve the quality of life in Los Angeles County by providing responsive, efficient and high quality public services that promote the self-sufficiency, well-being and prosperity of individuals, families, businesses and communities.*

County of Los Angeles Strategic Plan

Introduction

Los Angeles County is home to 10 million people and over three million households with children. These households include families of great wealth and families in dire poverty; families with two parents, single parents and unrelated caregivers; families living in dense urban areas and families living in sparsely populated rural areas; families coping with the trials presented by healthy active children; and families struggling with the burdens of addiction and abuse. As different as these families are, many share a need for high quality child care and development services.

High quality child care and development services¹ have the capacity to promote the healthy development of children from birth to 12 years of age, support parents in the challenging task of child rearing, and make it possible for parents to be employed, pursue education and/or training. Children with special needs and their families benefit when these services are available to participants through age 21. A growing body of research has documented the social and economic benefits of investing in child care and development programs. Positive child outcomes have been particularly impressive for low-income children and those most at-risk of school failure.² In addition, participants in programs with strong family support components were less likely to experience child abuse, neglect or juvenile delinquency.³

Despite this information being commonly available, there continues to be a wide gap between what we **know** and what we **do** to promote the healthy development of all children.⁴ The Board of Supervisors is committed to mobilizing County departments and stakeholders from the private and public sectors to work across disciplines and jurisdictions to ensure that families in Los Angeles County have access to the services they need to build strong foundations for productive lives.

The Time to Act is Now

*Prevention is more effective and less costly than remediation,
and earlier is far better than later.⁵*

Many County departments act as a safety net for children and families throughout Los Angeles County. Child abuse, juvenile delinquency, mental illness and poverty rob individuals and families of their potential to build strong foundations for healthy and productive lives. Young children who have endured maltreatment are at substantial risk of acquiring developmental problems and have relatively high levels of behavior problems reported by their caregivers.⁶ County departments, as well as hundreds of community and faith-based organizations, devote millions of dollars to treating these symptoms and still the problems persist.

Research from multiple disciplines has demonstrated that child care and development programs can provide the interventions needed to **prevent** these negative outcomes. In addition, various child care and development programs have generated cost – benefit ratios ranging from \$2.36 to \$17.07.⁷

New solutions to long standing problems are already operating in our neighborhoods, on school campuses and in our community centers. Regulations, eligibility requirements and a silo mentality have deterred efforts to integrate and maximize the impact of child care and development services. Over the past three years, child care and development programs in Los Angeles County have returned \$162 million in subsidized child care and development funds to the California Department of Education (CDE). During that same period, over 40,000 income eligible children and their families were waiting for access to subsidized child care.

Los Angeles County is committed to a policy framework that will support the integration of child care and development into the services offered by County departments and its community partners. This policy framework is also intended to engage Los Angeles County as a collaborative partner with the child care and development community in efforts to expand access to and the supply of quality child care and development services. These partners will share responsibility for ensuring the efficient and effective use of child care and development resources. To do any less, is to squander the potential of our children and jeopardize the future of all citizens.

The Context of Child Care and Development

*When we invest wisely in children and families,
the next generation will pay that back through a lifetime
of productivity and responsible citizenship.
When we fail to provide children with what they need to build a strong
foundation for healthy and productive lives,
we put our future prosperity and security at risk.⁸*

Currently there are over 3,000 licensed child care and development centers, nearly 11,000 licensed family child care homes, and very a large pool of unlicensed family, friends and neighbors caring for young children in Los Angeles County. These services are available to infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school age children; children with special needs and children whose first language is not English; and families where parents are employed, in school or training, in court ordered counseling or drug treatment, seeking permanent housing or enrichment experiences for their children.

Local child care and development services are sponsored by a variety of organizations, including public schools and family service, anti-poverty, faith-based, immigrant and proprietary organizations. This diversity contributes to a rich network of services, with the potential to meet the needs of this County's linguistically and ethnically diverse families.

It also reflects this County's nearly one hundred year history of formal child care and development services. The earliest child care and development centers, Pasadena Day Nursery (1910) and Long Beach Day Nursery (1912), were intended to combat the "maladies" associated with immigrant families, such as poverty, single-parent households and working mothers.⁹ Since that time, most major government investments in child care and development services have been associated with efforts to employ parents. In the 1940s, the federal government facilitated large-scale maternal employment in the war industries by funding comprehensive child care and development programs. In California, these funds were administered by the Department of Education. Following World War II, California sustained and expanded this network of child care and development services with State funds, making it possible for single parents to pursue training and employment. The federally funded Head Start program, launched in the 1960's, was unique in that the child was the primary client. Rather than expecting parents to be employed, Head Start staff sought to involve parents in the program. In the 1970s and 1980s, following the example of other industries, Federal and State governments established child care and development programs for their employees. In the 1990's, with the introduction of welfare reform, the federal investment in child care and development grew substantially. Most recently, child care and development services have been called upon to provide the experiences and skills that will "close the achievement gap" when young children enter the public school system. While the potential benefits of child care and development services have been documented, funding to ensure access and quality has not followed.

The regulated system of child care and development services, while large, still falls far short of meeting the demand, is of inconsistent quality, and fees range from fully subsidized to 100 percent parent supported. These disparities are not unique to Los Angeles County – nor are they unique to the child care and development sector. County administered affordable housing, child welfare, health, and mental health services struggle with similar challenges. What does set child care and development apart from other service sectors is the absence of a County government entity with programmatic or funding oversight.

Regulations and Oversight

In Los Angeles County, the location of child care and development centers is determined by the zoning ordinances of 88 individual cities. Similarly, each program is subject to city administered fire regulations and business licenses. Programs operating in the unincorporated areas of the County are subject to County zoning ordinances and fire regulations. The County Department of Public Health oversees health regulations countywide, with the exception of the cities of Long Beach, Pasadena and Vernon. Child care and development programs (centers and family child care homes) are also subject to State regulations, administered by the Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). Unfortunately, repeated State budget crises have eroded the schedule for on-site monitoring of child care and development programs conducted by CCLD. Previously, on-site monitoring was conducted annually. Currently, on-site monitoring takes place only once every five years. The value of a licensing system that conducts on-site monitoring less than annually is seriously diminished.¹⁰

Funding for Child Care and Development Services

While the regulatory picture for child care and development services is complicated – the funding situation is nearly incomprehensible. State and Federal governments provide the majority of funds to subsidize the child care costs of low-income families. Over 150 organizations in the County contract directly with CDE and 17 organizations contract directly with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. A notable exception is funding for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) Stage 1 child care services, which flows from CDSS to the County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS).

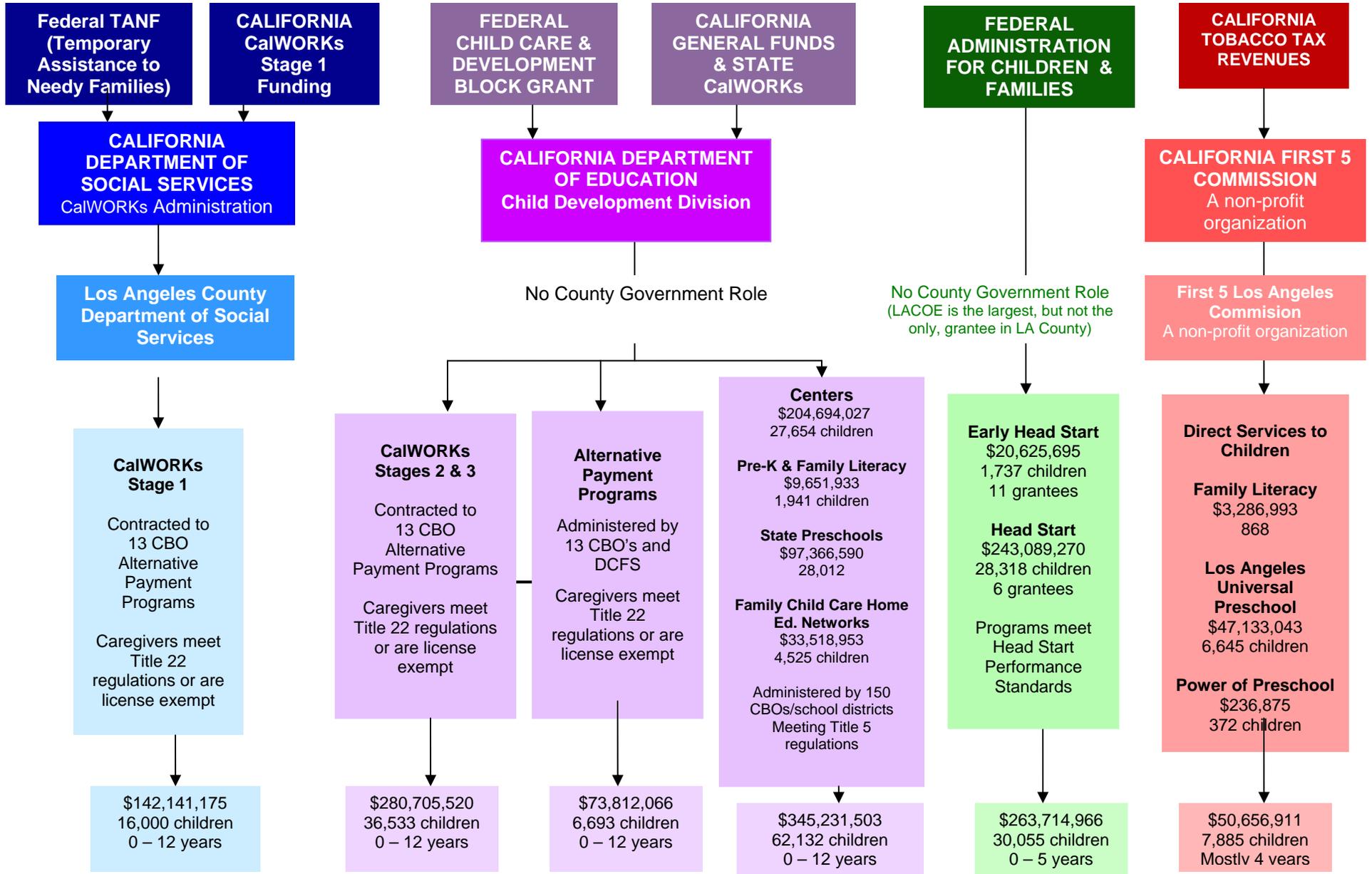
Each funding source has its own eligibility criteria. Families qualifying for participation in the federally funded Head Start program are subject to the Federal Poverty Guidelines (annual earnings of less than \$21,200 for a family of four), whereas families with incomes under 75 percent of California's State Median Income (\$48,372 for a family of four) may be eligible to participate in one or more of the ten programs funded by the California Department of Education/Child Development Division (CDE/CDD). For some programs, the parent must be working, in school or training, but not for others. Some programs operate part-day, part-year, while others operate 12 hours a day, throughout the year. Some programs only serve four year olds, while others serve children from birth to 12 years of age.

Los Angeles County is in need of a cohesive strategy that allows programs to maximize the resources available for child care and development services, and effectively deliver those services to children and families. The chart on page 5 identifies the major sources of public funding for child care and development services and the specific programs operating in Los Angeles County. The chart on page 6 describes the equally complicated funding scenario for training and support programs targeting child care and development staff persons, and support services offered to parents.

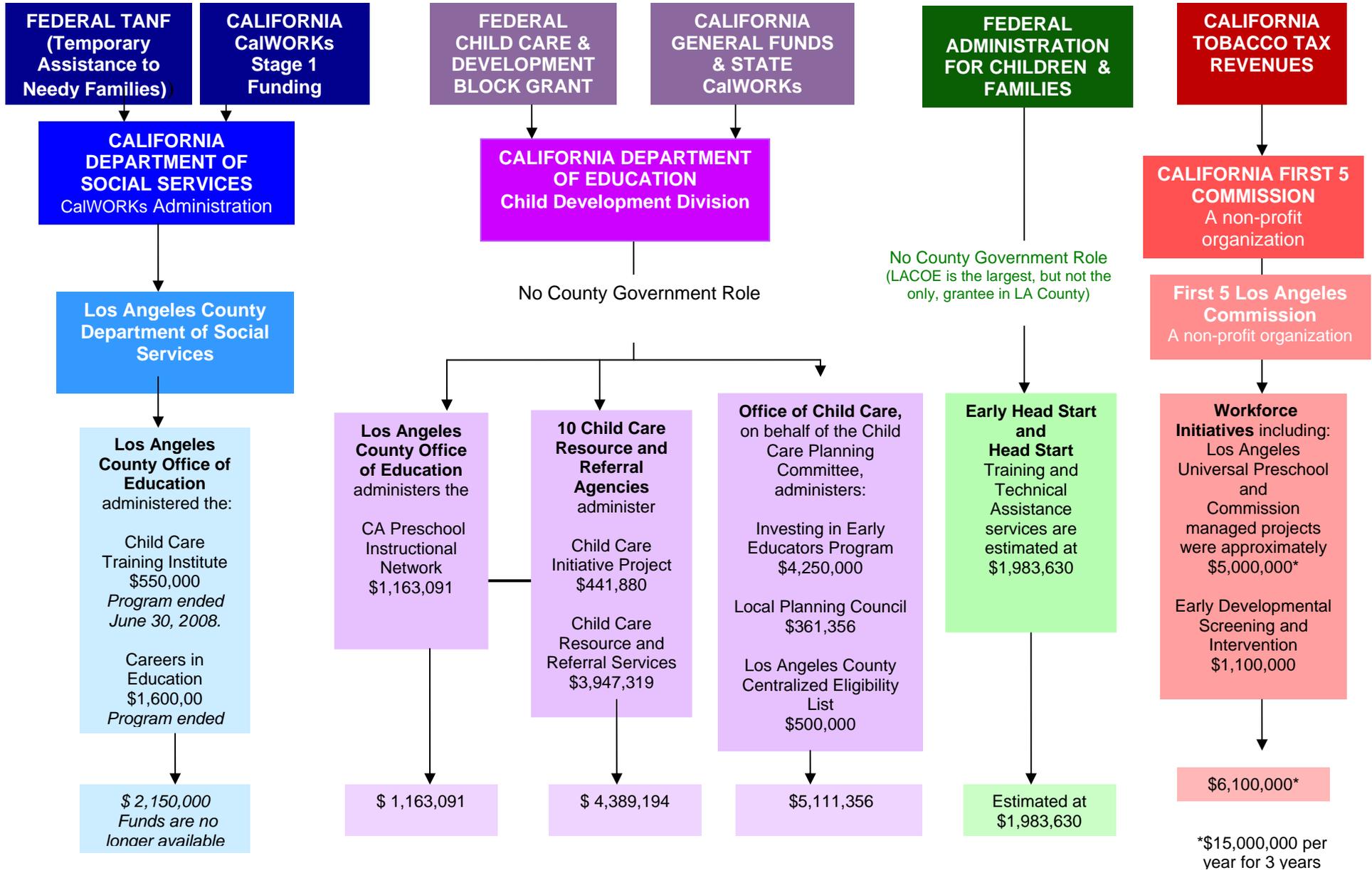
Building Partnerships

Despite nearly a century of service and a cadre of dedicated child care providers, the local child care and development “system” is fragile, under-funded and without a County focal point. On the other hand, it holds the potential to prevent child abuse and neglect from occurring as well as the potential to increase school success among this County's most vulnerable children. This Policy Framework seeks to engage County departments and stakeholders from child care and development and other disciplines to strengthen the child care and development system and increase its capacity to meet the needs of children and families throughout Los Angeles County. Such collaboration is necessary to ensure that efforts to improve access to services for one population do not come at the expense of another.

Publicly Funded Child Care and Development Services in Los Angeles County for Fiscal Year 2006-07
Totaling \$1,105,605,230 for 151,413 Children



Publicly Funded Child Care and Development Quality Enhancement and Family Support Services Fiscal Year 2006-07



Statement of Need

All I want is the best for my children.¹¹

While a variety of circumstances can trigger a family's need for child care and development services, all families share a desire to provide their children with a good beginning. Similarly, all County departments have a stake in ensuring that County clients, employees, and residents have access to high quality, affordable and accessible child care and development services. Navigating the child care and development system can be challenging for any family. Los Angeles County is committed to establishing a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary Policy Framework that ensures all families have access to the services needed to build strong foundations for healthy and productive lives.

County Clients

- Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) serves as “parent” to thousands of vulnerable young children. Research has demonstrated that an investment in high quality child development and family support services can prevent child abuse and juvenile delinquency from occurring at all, support the healthy development of children, and strengthen families. Strategies are needed to ensure that these families and caregivers can both navigate and access the child care and development system.
- DPSS administers the CalWORKs program in Los Angeles County. CalWORKs is a cash aid program for low income families to meet their basic needs. Families involved in work activities or training are eligible to receive a child care subsidy.¹² Strategies are needed to ensure that participating families have the both the time and information needed to evaluate their child care options and make sound choices.
- The Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health operates more than 50 program sites and contracts with more than 1,000 mental health providers to deliver a spectrum of mental health services to persons of all ages. Services for young children have been seriously under-represented. Strategies are needed to connect child care and development and mental health services, so as to increase access to mental health services for children and families, and improve the quality of child care and development services.
- The 80 kindergarten-12 (K-12) school districts operating in Los Angeles County have developed various approaches to “close the achievement gap.” Districts must be encouraged to develop strategies to balance academic skills with efforts to promote initiative, self-confidence, and persistence in learning among young children.

County Employees

- Los Angeles County employs over 100,000 persons, many of whom are parents of young children. Recognizing the recruitment, retention and productivity benefits associated with employer-related child development services, Los Angeles County has established 11 child care and development centers for its workforce. Strategies are needed to ensure broader access to these programs by employees and to ensure consistently high quality services.

County Residents

- Fifty-one percent of the children in Los Angeles County live in households where all parents work.¹³ Over 49,000 children of working parents in this County are in need of subsidized child care.¹⁴ Strategies are needed to increase the supply of high quality child care and development services, and to maximize the County's unique role to coordinate resources and implement innovative solutions within the unincorporated areas.

Opportunities for Leadership

*Responsible investments in services
for young children and their families focus on benefits relative to cost.
Inexpensive services that do not meet quality standards are a waste of money.
Stated simply, sound policies seek maximum value rather than minimal cost.¹⁵*

This Policy Framework is intended to mobilize County departments and stakeholders from both the private and public sectors, to work across disciplines and jurisdictions, for the purpose of integrating child care and development services into all efforts aimed at supporting families and communities.

The Office of Child Care is responsible for the implementation of the Policy Framework, with input from the Policy Roundtable for Child Care (Roundtable), the Child Care Planning Committee (Planning Committee), County departments and community stakeholders. In this leadership capacity, the Office of Child Care will serve as a much needed focal point on child care and development issues within the County government structure, and as a bridge to related service sectors, including County departments.

Partnerships

Together, the Roundtable and the Planning Committee have paved the way for the formation of the Policy Framework. The Roundtable was created by the Board of Supervisors in 2000 and is charged with strengthening the child care system by providing policy recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. The Roundtable provides a forum where child care and development issues are examined within the context of County administrated services including but not limited to child welfare, criminal justice, and economic self-sufficiency.

By contrast, the Planning Committee fulfills a California Department of Education (CDE) mandate to county governments to conduct certain child care planning functions. In compliance with that mandate, the Planning Committee has developed a 10-Year Strategic Plan for child care and development services in Los Angeles County and monitors progress toward the 10-Year Strategic Plan goals.¹⁶ The Planning Committee also documents the ongoing need for child care subsidies and tracks the utilization of CDE child care and development subsidies in the County.

The members of these two bodies provide the Office of Child Care with access to “external” stakeholders from a variety of disciplines and to the Board of Supervisors. Further, their regular meetings afford the Office of Child Care an ongoing mechanism to solicit input on a range of issues, including the implementation of the Policy Framework.

The Policy Framework calls for change within County departments. The Office of Child Care is located in the Service Integration Branch of the Chief Executive Office and functions under the Deputy Chief Executive Officer responsible for County departments directly impacting Children and Families Well-being. This placement will facilitate efforts to advance the Policy Framework within the County government structure.

Goals, Objectives, and Opportunities for Partnerships: 2008 - 2010

You can't roll up your sleeves and get to work if you're still wringing your hands.¹⁷

This Policy Framework defines four major goals to be carried out during the first two years. These goals can be summarized as:

- 1) Increase access to high quality child care and development services aimed at preventing child abuse and neglect, supporting family self-sufficiency, and promoting school and life success.
- 2) Advance public policies - local state, and federal – to ensure that children and their families receive high quality child care and development and family support services.
- 3) Facilitate the capacity of child care and development programs, publicly and privately funded, as well as fee-based, to meet the needs of children and families in Los Angeles County.
- 4) Review implementation of the Policy Framework and update goals on a biennial schedule.

The following section expands on these goals, defining specific objectives and providing examples of partnership opportunities.

Goals, Objectives, and Opportunities for Partnerships - 2008 - 2010

- 1) Mobilize County departments and stakeholders to incorporate access to high quality child care and development services into services aimed at: 1) preventing child abuse and neglect; 2) supporting family self sufficiency; and 3) promoting school and life success.**

- a) Objectives Related to Clients of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)**

- i) Work with representatives of DCFS and the Education Coordinating Council to establish baseline data on the need for and the ability of DCFS clients to access child care and development services, using both DCFS and community resources. By June 30, 2010, baseline data on those elements will be compiled on children birth through 5 years of age and their caretakers. Ongoing progress to ensure that DCFS clients are accessing child care and development services will be measured against this baseline.
- ii) Work with representatives of DCFS and community stakeholders, to develop a cadre of licensed child care settings (family child care homes and child care and development centers) that are trained to meet the unique needs of children who have experienced abuse or neglect and their families. To address these issues, Fiscal Year 2008-09, training opportunities will include:
 - (a) Information on the Strengthening Families Model and Protective Factors
 - (b) Developmental Screening Tools
 - (c) Environment Rating Scales
- iii) Work with DCFS to increase the consistent utilization of high quality child care and development services for DCFS clients from birth through age five. By June 30, 2011, the utilization of child care and development services will increase by five percent over the baseline.
- iv) Work with representatives of DCFS and lead agencies implementing the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Projects (PIDP), Family Preservation, Family Support, and other family centered services to establish relationships with the appropriate child care resource and referral agencies and local child care and development providers.
 - (a) By December 1, 2008, the Office of Child Care will develop and distribute resource materials to assist lead agencies in understanding the range of child care resources, including but not limited to subsidized and fee-based, full- and part-day, and ages served.
 - (b) By January 15, 2009, document that child care agencies are included in the PIDP networks.
 - (c) By March 1, 2009, the Office of Child Care will work with representatives of community-based organizations serving as leads on PIDP, Family Preservation, Family Support, and Child Abuse Prevention Intervention Treatment, to establish strategies to facilitate client access to subsidized child care services. These strategies will include training agencies to enter families in the Los Angeles Centralized Eligibility List (LACEL) or establishing

connections with local child care resource and referral agencies to enter eligible families in the LACEL.

- (d) By June 30, 2010, the Office of Child Care will work with other family centered services, including but not limited to kinship caregivers, to assist clients in accessing subsidized child care and development services.
- v) Research resources that could be used to offer child care providers participating in the Steps to Excellence Program (STEP) and earning a STEP rating of 3 or higher, or completing specified training and serving DCFS subsidized children, a quality bonus. Report on the results of this research by July 1, 2009.
- vi) Ensure that DCFS policies and procedures related to pregnant and parenting teens address their child care and development needs while the parent is under the jurisdiction of the department and provide for continuity of those services after the parent is emancipated from the foster care system. Provide a status report by March 15, 2009.

Opportunities for Partnerships Under this Objective

- *Participation in training to improve the capacity of child care and development programs to strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect.*
- *Relationship building and service coordination between child care and development programs and child welfare service providers.*

b) Objectives Related to Clients of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)

- i) Work with representatives of DPSS, the child care resource and referral agencies, First 5 LA, and other stakeholders, to research communication strategies which would inform DPSS clients, including but not limited to CalWORKs participants, of the importance of brain development in young children birth to five years of age and the potential for high quality child care and development services to support that development. By January 15, 2009, report on the progress made on developing communication strategies, the potential for First 5 LA funding of those strategies, and the establishment of long-term partnerships to connect DPSS clients to community resources.
- ii) Work with representatives of DPSS and the child care resource and referral agencies to inform CalWORKs clients who choose license-exempt care, that they may be able to also enroll age-eligible children in part-day services such as Head Start, State Preschool, Los Angeles Universal Preschool (LAUP) or Pre-kindergarten and Family Literacy Programs. Increase the percentage of CalWORKs clients with children three through five years of age using licensed child care services by five percent by June 30, 2010.

Opportunities for Partnerships Under this Objective

Relationship building between CalWORKs clients, their license exempt child care providers, and part-day preschool programs serving three- and four-year olds.

c) Objectives Related to County Employees

- i) Analyze the current network of employee child care centers and develop recommendations on how to support the quality of these services, ensure access to employees of all incomes, expand services, and ensure the economic viability of all programs. A status report will be submitted by October 30, 2008.
- ii) Serve as contact point and technical advisor for all County departments considering or actually implementing employee child care and development services.

Opportunities for Partnerships Under this Objective

- *Identification of potential on-site child care and development program operators and distribution of that directory.*

d) Objectives Related to County Residents

- i) Assess the community need for and potential economic viability of incorporating child care and development services in County facilities, such as parks, community centers and other spaces by December 30, 2009. The resulting report will identify the site, the community need for child care and development services, if renovation or new construction would be needed, recommended ages of children to be served and if subsidy will be necessary to support the operation of the program. This report will also include information on licensed child care and development programs within a three to five mile radius of the County facility.
- ii) Identify and report on up to five viable sites, where child care and development services could be incorporated into existing County facilities by December 30, 2010.

Opportunities for Partnerships Under this Objective

- *Operation of child care and development services in new or renovated County facilities.*

2) Advance public policies at all levels of government, local, State, and Federal, which ensure that children and their parents receive the child care and development and family support services needed to build strong foundations for healthy, productive lives. Identify opportunities for Los Angeles County to promote collaboration among service providers and advocates on behalf of needed legislative or regulatory changes.

- a. Convene by November 15, 2008, with assistance from the Roundtable and Planning Committee, child care and development policy experts, representatives of funding organizations, local child care and development operators and County department representatives to assess policies that impede the full utilization of State funding for child care and development services.
- b. Forward recommended legislation or regulatory changes needed to allow greater flexibility in the administration of CDE and CDSS funded child care and development services to Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) by November 25, 2008. Such flexibility is intended to maximize the use of subsidized child care funds allocated to programs in Los Angeles County.

- c. Mobilize the Roundtable, Planning Committee and other stakeholders, to assist IGR in promoting the adoption of legislative or regulatory changes.
- d. Collaborate with the Roundtable, IGR, First 5 LA, LAUP and other stakeholders to identify one or more common legislative goals and develop a shared strategy to promote those goals by December 15, 2008.

Opportunities for Partnerships

- *Participating in the convening of stakeholders to take place prior to October 30, 2008 and contributing to recommendations on how to streamline the administration of child care and development services.*
- *Contributing information to the development of a common legislative agenda.*

3) Facilitate the capacity of child care and development service providers, publicly and privately funded, to meet the child care and development needs of local families.

- a) Convene at least one meeting of representatives of First 5 LA, LAUP, LACOE, local funders of child care and development services, and key County departments whose clients include families needing child care and development services and family support by January 30, 2009. This group will develop strategies for improving outreach, access, enrollment and integration of child care and development services with other County services for low-income families and their children.
 - i) The following County departments will be invited to engage in this conversation: DPSS, DCFS, Mental Health, Community and Senior Services, Child Support, Libraries, Parks and Recreation, and Probation.
- b) Summarize and forward the results of this discussion by February 25, 2009, including recommendations on how to promote the effective utilization of local child care resources and leverage other resources; simplify and/or align eligibility criteria; streamline application materials; and serve “hard to reach” populations.

Opportunities for Partnerships

- *Participating in the convening scheduled to take place prior to January 30, 2009.*
- *Providing input to the summary document.*

4) Update this plan every two years, on the anniversary of the Policy Framework’s adoption. Updates will include input from the Roundtable, Planning Committee, County departments and community stakeholders. Building on this experience, future goals may include recommendations on Countywide mechanisms to:

- a) Effectively integrate local, State and Federal resources for child care and development services and to assure the maximum utilization of all such resources.
- b) Promote collaborative efforts between child care and development services and school districts on the issue of school readiness.

End Notes

¹ *Summary of Essential Findings: A Science-Based Framework for Early Childhood Policy* (2007). National Forum on Early Childhood Program Evaluation and the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, www.developingchild.harvard.edu.

High quality center-based child development programs that have positive impacts on young children's development provide some combination of the following features:

- Highly skilled staff;
- Small class sizes and high adult-to-child ratios;
- A language-rich environment;
- Age-appropriate curricula and stimulating materials in a safe physical setting;
- Warm, responsive interactions between staff and children; and
- High and consistent levels of child participation.

² *Reaching All Children? Understanding Early Care and Education Participation Among Immigrant Families* (2006), CLASP, www.clasp.org.

³ Reynolds, Arthur J., and Robertson, Dylan L., "School-Based Early Intervention and Later Child Maltreatment in the Chicago Longitudinal Study," *Child Development*, Vol. 74, No. 1, 2003, pp. 3-26.

⁴ *The Science of Early Childhood Development* (2007). The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, <http://www.developingchild.net>.

⁵ Knudsen, E., Heckman, J., Cameron, J., and Shonkoff, J. *Economic, neurobiological, and behavioral perspectives on building America's future workforce*, ed. Snyder, S.H.. The National Academy of Sciences of the USA, www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.06060888103.

⁶ *After Abuse: Early Intervention Services for Infants and Toddlers* (August 2008), www.fpg.unc.edu

⁷ *What Does Economics Tell Us about Early Childhood Policy?* RAND Labor and Population Research Brief, 2008, www.rand.org

Programs cited included:

<i>Program</i>	<i>Benefit-Cost Ratio</i>
Abecedarian Program	\$ 3.23
Chicago Parent Child Program	\$ 7.14
High/Scope Perry Preschool	\$17.08

The policy brief also summarized the monetary savings (or costs) from affected child outcomes:

<u>Effect on Child Outcome</u>	<u>Monetary Benefits (or Costs) to Government</u>
Reduced child maltreatment	Lower costs to child welfare system
Reduced child accidents and injuries	Lower costs for emergency room visits & other public health care costs
Reduced incidence of teen childbearing	Lower costs for public health care system & social welfare programs
Reduced grade repetition	Fewer years spent in K–12 education
Reduced use of special education	Lower costs for special education
Increased high school graduation rate	More years spent in K–12 education, i.e., drop-out rate reduced
Increased college attendance rate	More years spent in postsecondary education
Increased labor force participation and earnings in adulthood	Increased tax revenue
Reduced use of welfare & other means tested programs	Reduced administrative costs for social welfare; reduced welfare-program transfer payments
Reduced crime & contact with criminal justice system	Lower costs for the criminal justice system
Improved pregnancy outcomes	Lower costs for public health care system & from premature death
Reduced incidence of smoking & substance abuse	Lower medical costs from fewer low birth weight babies

⁸ *The Science of Early Childhood Development* (2007). The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, <http://www.developingchild.net>.

⁹ Tebb, Kathleen Phillips, Los Angeles County Child Care Advisory Board, *Thoughtful Reflections for Future Directions: the Los Angeles County Child Care Oral History*, 1996.

¹⁰ Campbell, N. D., et al, National Women's Law Center, *Be All that We Can Be: Lessons from the Military for Improving Our Nation's Child Care System*, April 2000, www.nwlc.org. Over a 10-year period, the U.S. military's child care system went from extremely problematic to exemplary. One of the factors contributing to the transformation was the development of comprehensive standards that providers had to meet in order to be certified to operate, and ensuring that these standards were met through a system of unannounced, quarterly inspections and serious sanctions for failure to comply.

¹¹ Parent comment.

¹² CalWORKs eligibility requirements include:

- Reside in California and intend to stay
- Have children or are pregnant and:
 - One or both parents are absent from the home, deceased or disabled
 - Both parents are in the home, but the principal wage earner is either unemployed or working less than 100 hours per month at the time they apply for assistance
- Be a United States citizen or lawful immigrant
- Have a Social Security number or have applied for one
- Have a net monthly income less than the maximum aid payment for family size
- Provide proof of regular school attendance for all school age children
- Provide proof of immunizations for all children under the age of six
- Cooperate with child support requirements
- Participate in welfare-to-work activities
- Perform 32 hours of work related activities per week for single parent household or 35 hours per week in a two-parent household

¹³ *The Economic Impact of the Early Care and Education Industry in Los Angeles County*, 2008, The Insight Center for Community Economic Development, www.childcare.lacounty.gov.

¹⁴ Reported by the Office of Child Care, May 2008.

¹⁵ *The Science of Early Childhood Development* (2007), The National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, <http://www.developingchild.net>.

¹⁶ To view the Child Care Planning Committee's updated 10-year strategic plan go to *Forging the Future: The Strategic Plan for Child Care and Development for Los Angeles County*, 2007, www.childcare.lacounty.gov.

¹⁷ Clinton, Hilary Rodham, *It Takes a Village* (1996), Simon and Schuster.