



CORE PRACTICE MODEL

A Guiding Framework for Child Welfare Practice

California Child Welfare Core Practice Model

BACKGROUND

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

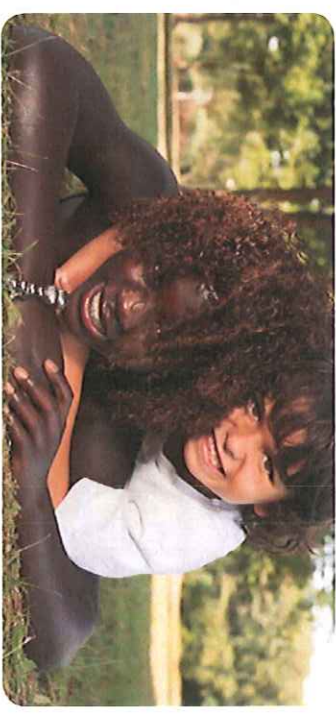
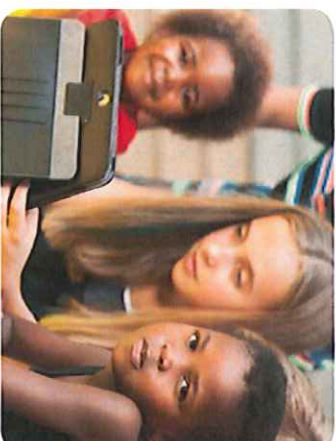
ORGANIZATIONAL THEORIES

CASEWORK COMPONENTS

PRACTICE ELEMENTS

PRACTICE BEHAVIORS

NEXT STEPS



VALUES

The Practice Model values reflect the theoretical framework and form a path from theory to practice, guiding the development of the core components, elements, and practice behaviors.

The following value statements are an expression of our beliefs and explain what we are striving for in our work with families:

- We believe in using prevention and early intervention to help keep children and youth safe from abuse and neglect.
- We believe the best way to support families is to honor their experiences and work together to build partnerships based on mutual respect and trust.
- We believe children, youth, and young adults need lifelong, loving permanent families and connections to family members, communities, and tribes.
- We believe children, youth, and young adults should have access to effective services that support their overall well-being and help them achieve their full potential.
- We believe that honestly sharing our assessment of strengths and concerns is essential for engaging with families and building connections.
- We believe in listening to families to learn about their culture and community.
- We believe that families can grow and change.
- We believe in helping families connect with effective, family-focused, strength-based services and supports.
- We believe in creating a competent and professional workforce through quality recruitment, training, and support.
- We believe in individual development, critical thinking, self-reflection, and humility.
- We believe in creating an organizational culture and climate that supports learning and development.

We Believe In

Lifelong Loving Families

Well-Being

**Growth &
Change**

**Individualized
Services**

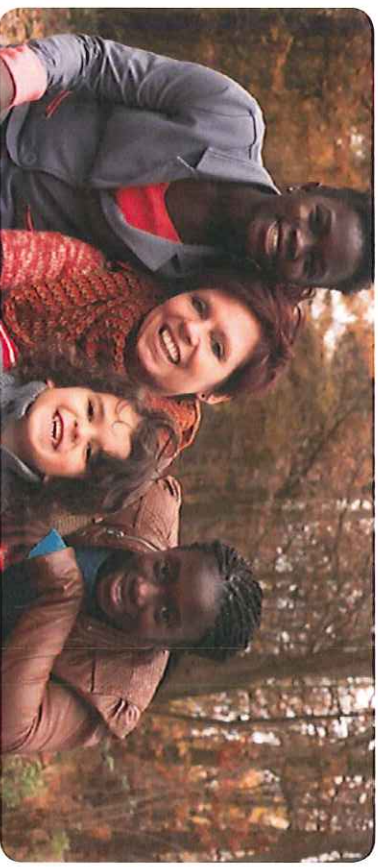
Partnership

Safety

**Professional
Competency**

**Respectful
Engagement**

Organizational Support



PRACTICE ELEMENTS - HOW WE DO IT

The practice elements identified in the model link the values and principles to the core aspects of practice that are essential to the model's success. They are the broad actions essential to promoting safety, permanency, and well-being for all children and youth. Each element is further defined and operationalized in practice behaviors that guide social workers in their practice with families, children, youth, young adults, caregivers, and communities.²

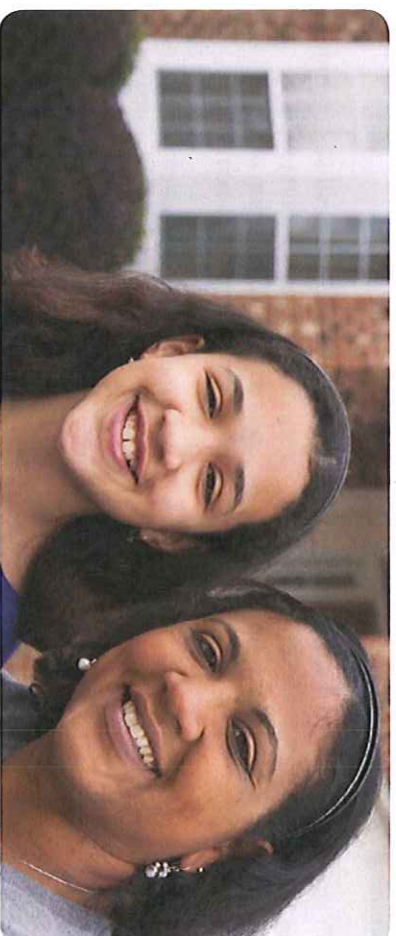
The practice elements in the California Child Welfare Core Practice Model are the broad actions we take to promote safety, permanency and well-being for all children and youth. We address safety, permanency, health, education, spiritual, and other family and youth needs through engagement, inquiry and exploration, and ongoing partnerships with families, youth, and their supportive communities and tribes.



Engagement

We continuously engage with families, their communities and tribes:

- We listen to families, tribes, caregivers, and communities and respect and value their roles, perspectives, abilities, and solutions in all teaming and casework practice.
- We encourage and support families and youth speaking out about their own experiences and taking a leadership role in assessing, finding solutions, planning, and making decisions.
- We affirm the family's experiences and create achievable goals in collaboration with the family.
- We use solution-focused, trauma-informed engagement practices and approach all interactions with openness, respect, and honesty. We use understandable language. We describe our concerns clearly.
- We connect with families, children, youth, communities, tribes, and service providers to help build networks of formal and informal supports and support connections.



Inquiry/Exploration

We explore well-being, family relationships, natural supports, and safety concerns:

- We use inquiry and mutual exploration with the family to find, locate, and learn about other family members and supportive relationships children, youth, young adults, and families have within their communities and tribes.
- We explore with children, youth, and young adults their worries, wishes, where they feel safe, and consider their input about permanency and where they want to live.
- We work with the family throughout our involvement to identify family members and other supports for the family, children, youth, and young adults.

Advocacy

We advocate for services, interventions, and supports that meet the needs of families, children, youth, and young adults:

- We promote use of effective, available, evidence-informed, and culturally relevant services, interventions, and supports.
- We speak out for children, youth, young adults, and families in order to support them in strengthening their family, meeting their needs, finding their voice, and developing the ability to advocate for themselves.
- We advocate with youth to promote permanency and permanent connections.
- We conduct early and ongoing screening and comprehensive assessments to inform our efforts to address safety, permanency, and well-being.

² This definition of practice elements is informed by the CAPP Practice Model http://cfpic.org/pdfs/capp/CAPP_Practice_Model_LEAN_IN_3_13.pdf. The Practice Elements developed for the model are informed by and consistent with CAPP, Katie A., and SOP.

III. Assessment Behaviors

- From the beginning and throughout all work with the child, youth, young adult, family, and their team to engage in initial and on-going safety and risk assessment and permanency planning.

IV. Teaming Behaviors

- Work with the family to build a supportive team.
- Facilitate the team process and engage the team in planning and decision-making with and in support of the child, youth, young adult, and family.
- Work with the team to address the evolving needs of the child, youth, young adult, and family.
- Work collaboratively with community partners to create better ways for children, youth, young adults, and families to access services.

V. Service Planning and Delivery Behaviors

- Work with the family and their team to build a plan that will focus on changing behaviors that led to the circumstances that brought the family to the attention of the child welfare agency and assist the child, youth, young adult, and family with safety, trauma, healing, and permanency.

VI. Transition Behaviors

- Work with the family to prepare for change in advance and provide tools for managing placement changes, social worker changes, and other significant transitions.



NEXT STEPS

The California Child Welfare Core Practice Model has been built by integrating existing initiatives and proven practices with extensive feedback from county representatives, tribal partners, youth, young adults, caregivers, parent partners, service providers, and other stakeholders from across the state. Staff, community, and tribal partners insisted that the successful implementation of the Practice Model will require that we pay attention to a wide range of organizational factors. The statewide Practice Model Design Team that guided the development of the Practice Model is currently committed to identifying and describing organizational factors in categories such as:

- Leadership,
- Organizational Culture, Climate, and Structure,
- Workforce Development, and
- Evaluation

Further work on identifying the resources that will fully support the implementation of the Practice Model, including the identified organizational factors, will enable California to move forward in making the Child Welfare Core Practice Model a reality across California.