

Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council (CAPCC) of Humboldt Annual Report 2023



The Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council of Humboldt County (CAPCC) is a broad-based, nonprofit advocacy organization that works to eliminate child abuse and neglect in our community through (1) striving to assure coordinated services and policies for the prevention, intervention and treatment of child abuse among agencies and organizations, (2) actively promoting and supporting high-quality programs that successfully reduce child abuse and neglect and (3) increasing public awareness of resources to help prevent child abuse and decrease family stress.

CAPCC's Mission:

Strengthening community connections to promote safe, healthy, resilient children and families in Humboldt.

In our 2022 report we described CAPCC's participation in advancing the goals of the Comprehensive Prevention Plan through the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) cross-sector collaborative (CSC). The FFPSA CSC is bringing together agencies that address the social determinants of health with the objective of strengthening the structure of supports for families in our county to make services accessible at many levels, in many locations, with integrated service provision. CAPCC has endorsed the concept of enhancing and expanding community pathways to family services that address many of the causes and conditions that engender child abuse and neglect so that we reach families before foster care becomes the only solution. CAPCC continues to lift up the work of Humboldt County's 16 Family Resource Centers, Family Centers at the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, the Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria and the Wiyot Tribe, and Humboldt County Transition Age Youth Collaboration (HCTAYC), as important sources of family support across our widespread rural geography.

CAPCC is also working closely with FFPSA and the Public Health Branch of DHHS to align programs and identify measurable steps toward health outcomes in the Healthy Beginnings/ACEs priority area of the 2022 Community Health Improvement Plan. CAPCC participated in identifying this priority area and helped to set goals and objectives now part of the CHIP and continues to build on this work by participating in a Live Well Humboldt Priority Area work group to achieve greater collective impact for the work being done across our agencies and health service organizations.

CAPCC has been working with Child Welfare to find a way to promote the Child Protection Reporting Guide (CPRG) that was created as a result of the Attorney General's stipulations to Humboldt County CWS. It is a tremendous resource that we believe provides the best foundation for making informed decisions in reporting child abuse and neglect. Humboldt County was the first in the nation to create such a decision-making program for child

protection, and other states are following suit. However, its use requires education and training in order to become widely known and trusted as a reliable system of discernment, and at this time there are obstacles to its broad implementation that CAPCC and Child Welfare are trying to resolve in the hopes of increasing its use throughout the county.

Over the last several years, CAPCC became concerned about the impact on families caused by overreporting child abuse/neglect, particularly among certain professions. In 2022, according to the California Child Welfare Indicators Project, the rate of maltreatment allegations in Humboldt County was 81.7 per 1,000 children, just over twice the state rate.ⁱ In contrast, Child Welfare substantiations rate was 9.4 per 1,000 children.ⁱⁱ In 2023, CAPCC participated in various committees of the newly constituted California Taskforce on Mandated Reporting to Community Supporting, an initiative that arose from the state Citizens Review Panel, on which CAPCC maintains a seat. The Casey Family Foundation and family law advocates across the nation have raised the concern that many families enter the Child Welfare system as the result of poverty-related conditions that could be addressed by services without child removal, and as a result many families suffer family strife related to the unnecessary burdens of court surveillance and intervention.ⁱⁱⁱ Many states are in the process of reviewing their systems of Mandated Reporting. The state of New Hampshire and the city of San Diego are following Humboldt County's lead, developing their own version of the CPRG to improve child maltreatment reporting.

CAPCC decided to focus on three problems in current Mandated Reporting law:

1. Training for reporting abuse and neglect is woefully inconsistent, poorly regulated, and often not regularly updated with changes in regulation or new information.
2. Reporters' implicit biases have resulted in the over-reporting of BIPOC and poor families to Child Welfare,^{iv} and in our county, this is especially apparent among Native American families. Institutional racism in the reporting system is well-documented.^v
3. Research suggests that across professions, there is a very poor understanding of the meaning of severe neglect which the MR law was originally intended to address, and often reports of neglect are made for conditions that could and should be addressed by community support programs.^{vi}

In 2023 a CAPCC committee began designing a survey for mandated reporters in Humboldt County that would provide some recommendations to the state Taskforce on what we think may be important reforms for this system, while still retaining the strong ability to protect children who actually are suffering from child abuse and severe neglect. We expect our report to be available in the first half of 2024.

In 2023 we resumed our Community Roundtable Event (after a COVID pause) with a conference on Lifting Up Queer Youth, in which queer activists, members of HCTAYC and most significantly, a panel of LGBTQIA youth addressed the problems they face and their recommendations for improvement of accessing services in Humboldt. This conference surfaced an element of health care provision that had not previously been widely addressed. The Roundtable registered 125 in-person attendees, and 49 people virtually attended on Zoom.

During April 2023, which is Child Abuse Prevention Month, CAPCC accomplished the following:

1. Accepted a proclamation from the Board of Supervisors on April 4th.
2. Arranged for street banner to be hung in Eureka.
3. Published a Spring e-newsletter in Spanish, English, and Hmong, distributed via email throughout our membership, posted on our website and our Facebook page.
4. Arranged for public service announcements on local radio stations highlighting April as Child Abuse Prevention Month.
5. Provided a 15-minute interview on our Spanish-only radio station highlighting April as Child Abuse Prevention Month and the work that CAPCC is doing in the community.
6. Arranged for the children's memorial flag raising to occur on the 4th Friday of April at the Eureka Boys & Girls Club Teen Center.
7. Organized several pinwheel parades in April to coincide with our promotion of the Child Abuse prevention theme, including College of the Redwoods Child Development Center, four Little Learner sites in Arcata and Eureka, multiple sites of North Coast Children's Services Center, HCOE Special Beginnings, Little Saplings, and Changing Tides. The Yurok Tribe participated as well.
8. Recognized Two Feathers Native American Family Services, Abby Hamburg of Evolve Youth Services and Lex Siebuhr of Raven Project/YSB as recipients of our 2024 Children First awards. We posted their accomplishments to reduce or prevent child abuse on our Facebook page.

Also in 2023, CAPCC Board Members undertook a self-assessment designed by the Office for Child Abuse Prevention to consider the impact of our work overall. It has provided us with a basis for discussion in strategic planning that we will be undertaking in 2024. We also participated in the first Statewide Prevention Convening that occurred in 2023. This conference focused on resources needed for implementing our Comprehensive Prevention Plans and also provided the environment for several agencies and organizations to begin the integration and alignment of service organizations that is envisioned for the CPP.

We continue to share, through our newsletters, Facebook posts, and our website, regional training opportunities, child vaccination clinic schedules, and family-supporting activities not only in April but also throughout the year.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Bramlett, President
Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council of Humboldt

ⁱ Live Well Humboldt Community Health Dashboard, CCWIP. [Live Well Humboldt :: Indicators :: Allegations of Child Abuse :: County : Humboldt](#)

ⁱⁱ Live Well Humboldt Community Health Dashboard, CCWIP. [Live Well Humboldt :: Indicators :: Substantiated Child Abuse Rate :: County : Humboldt](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ Factors related to the disproportionate involvement of children of color in the child welfare system: a review and emerging themes. Alice Hines, et al. (2004) Children and Youth Services Review, Vol.26 507-527.

^{iv} Time doesn't heal all wounds: a call to end mandated reporting laws. Columbia Social Work Review, Vol. 19 (2021) 118-137.

^v Dynamics that contribute to racial disproportionality and disparity: Perspectives from child welfare professionals, community partners, and families. Keva Miller et al. Children and Youth Services Review 34 (2012) 2201-2207.

^{vi} System Transformation to Support Child & Family Well-Being: The Central Role of Economic & Concrete Supports: Chapin Hall Policy Brief. (2021) Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.