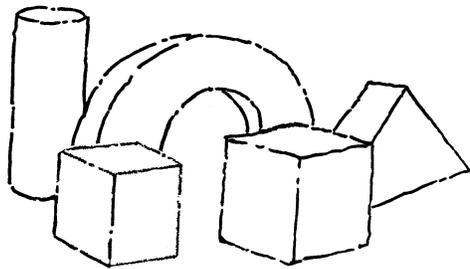


Our Children, Our Future



**Community Plan of the Napa County
Children and Families Commission**

April, 2000



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**The Napa County
Children and Families Commission**

April, 2000

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**California State Children and Families Commission
COUNTY COMMISSION STATUS CHECKLIST**

- Has your county adopted an ordinance to establish the Children and Families County Commission?
- Has your county established a County Commission Families and Children Trust Fund?
- Has your County Commission established one or more advisory committees to provide technical and professional expertise and support for any purposes that will be beneficial in accomplishing the purposes of the Act?
- Has your County Commission developed a strategic plan that includes the following required components?
 - a) A description of the goals and objectives proposed to be attained;
 - b) A description of the programs, services and projects proposed to be provided, sponsored or facilitated;
 - c) A description of how measurable outcomes of such programs, services and projects will be determined by the County Commission using appropriate reliable indicators; and
 - d) A description of how programs, services and projects relating to early childhood development within the county will be integrated into a consumer-oriented and easily accessible system.
- Has your County Commission conducted at least one public hearing on its proposed county strategic plan before the plan is adopted?
- Is your County Commission's proposed strategic plan consistent with and in furtherance of the purposes of the Act and any guidelines adopted by the State Commission at the time the plan is adopted?
- Does your County Commission's proposed strategic plan recognize that revenue allocations from the State Commission shall be used only to supplement existing levels of service and not to fund existing levels of service? Does your County Commission's proposed strategic plan recognize that no moneys in the California Children and Families Trust Fund shall be used to supplant state or local General Fund money?
- Has your County Commission adopted an adequate and complete county strategic plan for the support and improvement of early childhood education within the county?
- Has your County Commission submitted its adopted county strategic plan, and any subsequent revisions to the State Commission?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction. In 1998, the voters of California passed Proposition 10 and established the California Children and Families Act. This law requires that an additional surtax on cigarettes and tobacco products be distributed to counties for developing a comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development services.

On April 27th, 1999, the Board appointed nine members to the newly established Napa County Children and Families Commission. The vision of the Napa County Commission is that children will thrive in supportive, nurturing and loving environments, enter school healthy and ready to learn, and become productive, well-adjusted members of society.

Community Planning Process. The Commission used several approaches to collect information about the issues and concerns of Napa County families: (1) Future Search, an innovative planning conference; (2) a community survey distributed through the newspaper, child care providers, health clinics, elementary schools and nonprofit agencies; (3) public hearing; (4) community advisory committee; the Napa County website; and (5) use of other, relevant Napa County planning.

In addition, the Commission compiled a description of services for Napa County's children and families as well as the major trends in service needs. The resulting analysis of this information lead to the development of the following goals and core indicators:

Goal 1. Increased access to strength-based relational models of support services for all children and families in Napa County.

Core Indicators

- Increase in the number of health care professionals who are trained in infant brain development research and its relationship to parenting.
- Increase in the number of parent educators trained in infant brain development research and its relationship to parenting.
- Increase in the number of parents trained in infant brain development research and its relationship to parenting.

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Goal 2. Promote universal access to information and services for all children and families in Napa County.

Core Indicators

- Increase in the numbers of families who purchase affordable insurance (e.g., Healthy Families).
- Increase in the number of women who use prenatal care resources in the first trimester.
- Increase in the number and types of children and family services with Spanish speaking staff.
- Increase in the availability of resource information in a variety of languages.
- Increase in the number of families with newborns or children under 5 who are provided with a multidisciplinary home visit and/or information about available services.
- Increase in the availability of and use of tobacco cessation and relapse prevention services for pregnant women.
- Decrease in the countywide sales of tobacco products to adults and minors.
- Decrease in childhood head injuries.
- Increase in the number of mental health professionals trained in developmental and psychiatric assessment and treatment of children.
- Increase in the numbers of primary care physicians trained in the identification of childhood developmental and psychiatric concerns as well as local mental health resources.
- Increase in the number of assessments and referrals to appropriate services for children with behavioral or developmental challenges.
- Decrease in the number of emergency responses for child abuse and neglect.

Goal 3. Increased access to available, affordable, quality child care and development services for all children and families in Napa County.

Core Indicators

- Increase in the availability of all child care and development resources in North County, rural areas and in some neighborhoods of Napa
- Increase in the availability of child care resources currently not available at all (e.g., out-of-home, sick or emergency child care).
- Additional public and private funding of subsidies for child care and development services to assist most families.
- Increase in public information events (e.g., newspaper articles, radio spots) about the value of quality child care and early childhood development.

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- Increase in the number of personnel trained to work and remain employed in child care and development.
- Increase in the number of child care and development professionals trained in working with children who have complex behavioral and developmental challenges.
- Increase in the number of children who are provided with early contact, assessment and educational support prior to entering kindergarten.
- Increase in the number of child care and development professionals trained in infant brain development research.

Increasing Capacity for Integrated and Collaborative Services in Napa County. The Napa County Commission modeled the use of collaborative strategies in the development of the Community Plan (e.g., Future Search, Community Advisory Subcommittee). The Commission has also emphasized the importance of collaboration in its resource allocation process which stresses: (1) collaborative, community efforts; (2) the leveraging of additional resources; (3) a balanced pattern of community investments; and (4) the recognition of and accommodation to the growing diversity of children and families in Napa County. Finally, core indicators have been selected which will facilitate a collaborative approach to a comprehensive and culturally competent system of children and family services.

Resource Allocation. The Commission will use a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to allocate resources. In general, funding will be provided for collaborative efforts that move towards the mission, vision and goals for Napa County children and families. The Commission may decide to apportion a specific allocation to each goal area identified through the planning process. That is, depending on input from the Funding and Community Advisory Committees, the Commission may weight its resource allocation toward one goal area over others. The Commission's Funding Subcommittee will also develop an abbreviated mini-grant process. The purpose of the mini-grant is to encourage creativity in developing simple and efficient solutions to specific issues (e.g., materials, equipment, supplies).

The Commission may develop a formal plan for a dedicated Trust Fund in order to lengthen the time that resources will be available. The Commission may also need to allocate resources for the purposes of developing a systematic way to benchmark and periodically measure critical outcome indicators. That is, it may be that current indicators will not provide all of the information needed by the Commission to determine successful outcomes for Napa County children and families. If this is the case, the Commission may choose to allocate resources to a consultant contractor who will accomplish that work.

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Commission Structure. The guiding principle for the administration of this funding is to remain as organizationally lean as possible in order to maximize the resources available to Napa County. The Commission plans to carry out its work through a combination of paid staff, consultants, and volunteers. In addition to the Commission, several subcommittees will be developed. Each subcommittee listed will include less than a quorum of the total of Commission members and others (as determined by the Commission) from the Napa County community of stakeholders.

Evaluation. A formal Evaluation Plan will be developed and implemented once the Commission has completed its initial allocation of resources. The Commission may choose to seek the assistance of an independent evaluator to complete this work. The primary goals of the evaluation plan will be to: (1) measure progress towards the Commission's goals, objectives, outcomes and strategic results; (2) review the Commission's funding allocations and their impact on Napa County children and families; and (3) provide direction to the Commission on its own structure and effectiveness.

A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

This document contains several terms which are not typically used and are important to understanding the Community Plan. They are:

Culturally Competent Services

When developing family services which are culturally competent, it's important to: (1) recognize differences in family traditions regarding parenting; (2) consider one's own values and beliefs about other cultures; (3) listen, observe, ask questions, and be a learner; (3) provide a safe place for family members to share their fears, angers, resentments, joys, and concerns; (4) encourage family members to reach out for support; and (5) develop collaborative and multicultural approaches family services. (Source: Providing Family-Centered, Culturally Competent Care by James May, 1997)

Family Resource Center

A one-stop location where families can find current and reliable information which can improve the quality of children's lives and their families.

Health Care

For the purposes of this document, health care includes medical care, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, environmental quality and other related services which may improve the health and welfare of children and their families.

Infant Brain Development and Research

Current research in brain development shows that the early years of a child (0-5) have a large influence on success in school and in later life. By working as a team, child caregivers, health professionals and parent educators can support parents as they work to provide a loving, caring home environment for their children. This important work will result in children who enter school ready to learn and who become productive, well-adjusted members of society. (Source: California Children and Families Commission)

Reflective Supervision

Reflective supervision offers family service professionals a safe environment in which they can learn to meet the emotional and intellectual demands of their jobs. It involves: (1) stepping back to look at the way professionals interact with families; (2) collaboration with a supervisor or mentor in figuring out how to be successful with families; and (3) a commitment to regularly scheduled times for reflection and collaboration. (Source: Head Start)

Strength-Based Relational Models of Service

Models of healthcare and other family services which are based on a recognition of the strengths (rather than deficits) of families. Touchpoints (developed by Dr. Barry Brazelton) is one example of this model. It stresses: (1) prevention through developing relationships between parents and providers; (2) an appreciation of the significance of cultural, religious and social dynamics for families; (3) insight into the emotional experience of the developing parent; and (4) a departure from traditional family services by combining the knowledge and perspectives of developmental psychology, education, nursing, pediatrics, psychiatry, and social services. (Source: Brazelton Touchpoint Center)

Universal Access

The value and practice that all children and families, regardless of their income level, should have access to: (1) information about successful parenting, educational and healthcare practices; and (2) certain critical health services (e.g., immunization, communicable disease screening) provided on a nondiscriminatory basis and integrated with other necessary medical services.

STATE COMMISSION PLANNING TERMINOLOGY

The State Commission will use the following operational definitions for these strategic planning terms.

Vision	A broad, general statement of the desired future.
Mission	A specific statement of purpose for an organization.
Principles	The values and beliefs that provide guidance and inspiration to the organization.
Strategic Results	The overarching direction, focus or broad outcomes for improvement.
Goal	A long-range (e.g. 5-10 years) statement of desired change, based upon the vision statement.
Objective	A precise description of desired change that is short-range and measurable, and that supports the achievement of a specific goal.
Indicator	Specific process or performance measures that are used to determine whether programs, services, or projects are achieving goals and objectives.
Strategy	The course of action taken to achieve a stated objective.
Outcome	Taken at a point in time, the actual measure of the extent to which programs, services, or projects are achieving measurable objectives.

I. VISION, MISSION, PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC RESULTS

In November 1998, the voters of California passed Proposition 10, the *California Children and Families Act of 1998*. Under the Act, funds from additional excise taxes imposed on tobacco products are to be used for promoting, supporting, and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age. Determined through a local decision making process, the Act facilitates the creation of comprehensive and collaborative early childhood development services.

VISION STATEMENT

All Napa County children will thrive in supportive, nurturing and loving environments, enter school healthy and ready to learn, and become productive, well-adjusted members of society.

MISSION STATEMENT

Current research in brain development clearly indicates that the emotional, physical and intellectual environment to which a child is exposed to in the early years of life has a profound impact on how the brain is organized. The experiences a child has with respect to parents and caregivers significantly influences how a child will function in school and later in life.

The California Children and Families Act of 1998 is designed to provide, on a community-by-community basis, all children prenatal to five years of age with a comprehensive, integrated system of early childhood development services. Through the integration of health care, quality child care, parent education and effective intervention programs for families at risk, children and their parents and caregivers will be provided with the tools necessary to foster secure, healthy and loving attachments. These attachments will lay the emotional, physical and intellectual foundation for every child to enter school ready to team and develop the potential to become productive, well-adjusted members of society.

PRINCIPLES

In the investment of funds on behalf of Napa County's children and families, the Commission will be guided by the following values:

Collaborative efforts gain the greatest return on investment. The Commission will act on its belief that the development of new or expanded services for children and families must be the result of collaboration between agencies, organizations, and community stakeholders.

Investments that leverage additional resources broaden funding opportunities. The Commission believes that the range of community investments can be broadened through a blending of financial resources (e.g., in-kind funds, grants, philanthropy).

Funding decisions must result in a balanced, community investment portfolio. The Commission believes strongly that funding decisions must be considered in light of the balance they bring to the overall investment in children and families in Napa County. Those investment balances include:

- **Short-term and long-term.** Some investments will bring short-term (1 year) and others long-term (3-5 years) improvements in services and outcomes for children and families.
- **Public and private sector.** Development of new and expansion of current services should be considered in both public and private agencies and organizations.
- **Prevention and intervention.** Investment in prevention is critical and often overlooked when intervention needs are significant and urgent.
- **Direct service and professional development.** An investment in the training of *best practices* for professionals is as important as the direct services they provide.
- **Small and large investments.** Small investments (less than \$25,000) can often produce a significant return and should not be overlooked for large investments.
- **Major themes of planning process.** Community investments should be focused on the service needs suggested by public input throughout the planning process.

STRATEGIC RESULTS

Using the principles previously stated, the Commission hopes to achieve the following broad outcomes for children and families in Napa County:

1. Improved Family Functioning: Strong Families

Successful and strong families are those who are able to provide for the physical, mental and emotional development of their children. Young children are entirely dependent upon caregivers for survival and nurturing. It is the interaction of the parent or primary caregiver with the child that shapes the child's view of himself or herself as an individual capable of interacting with the world and achieving desired outcomes from that interaction. Parents and caregivers provide the foundation for a child's ability to create successful relationships, solve problems and carry out responsibilities. Children who are encouraged to develop a strong self-concept from an early age, are more likely to achieve a productive and fulfilling life.

2. Improved Child Development: Children Learning and Ready for School

The importance of preparing children to succeed in school is critical. The role of education in a child's later ability to create a healthy, fulfilling life has been well documented. Skills that allow one to problem solve and think creatively are developed in early childhood education settings and nurtured through community and parental reinforcement.

3. Improved Child Health: Healthy Children

Children who are healthy in mind, body and spirit, grow up confident in their ability to live a fulfilling, productive life. Healthy children have sufficient nutrition, health care, nurturing and guidance, and mental stimulation, and they live in families and communities that value them. The research on child development and the impact of the early years, emphasize the importance of children and their mothers beginning life with healthy nutrition and healthy environments.