

CALIFORNIA PRACTICE MODEL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is it?

The Child Welfare Core Practice Model for California is intended as a framework to:

- Outline how services should be developed and delivered.
- Support consistent implementation of child welfare practice statewide.
- Allow child welfare professionals to be more effective in their roles.
- Improve accountability and outcomes for children and families.

Why is it needed?

Currently there are multiple emerging and established initiatives and practices that have impacted the ability to have a consistent statewide approach for child welfare services.

How will this impact the work that I do? (or What's in it for me?)

A Core Practice Model will:

- Benefit social workers and empower them to perform their work at the highest level.
- Help to identify the tools needed to support social workers and other child welfare and child-serving staff to optimize outcomes for children and families.

Specifically, the Core Practice Model will provide:

- A framework for child welfare work that guides practice, service delivery and decision-making.
- Consistency across the state in how child welfare approaches families.
- Guidance for child welfare in identifying programs and initiatives that fit within the framework.
- Structure for providers in the delivery of services.

What are the common elements of a child welfare practice model?

Practice models are comprised of 6 elements:

1. The Overarching Theoretical Framework:
 - Emphasizes the logical connection between the practice model and the desired outcome.
 - Summarizes the conceptual approach for the practice model.
 - Uses evidence to explain how the approach will address specific needs.
2. Core Values and Practice Principles:
 - Work together to reflect the theoretical framework.
 - Form the path from theory to practice.
 - Are different but work together.
 - Values are an expression of an ideal or optimal state of being.
 - Principles provide an idea of what the value would look like in practice.
3. Casework Components:
 - Describe key casework functions that the practice model will address.
 - Help link the model to specific casework tasks such as:
 - Engagement.
 - Assessment.
 - Service Planning.
 - Monitoring and Adapting.
 - Transition.
4. Practice Elements:
 - Define how the model proposes to embody its values and enact its theoretical basis at the practice level.
 - Link the model's values and principles to the core aspects of practice that are essential to the model's success.
5. Practice Behaviors:
 - Provide direction to practitioners about how they will practice social work using the practice model.

- Are specific enough to be observable and recognizable to all parties
 - Provide a foundation for common understanding of the expected practice so agency and community partners can create coordinated support.
 - Provide a basis for evaluation of model fidelity and outcomes.
6. Organization and System Standards:
- Are important in ensuring that all parts of the organization and system are working in concert to support the practice model.
 - Reinforce the model's theoretical orientation, values and principles, describe system activities, policies and protocols needed to support and sustain the model.
 - Describe how systemic barriers to implementing the model will be identified and addressed.
 - Clarify processes for aligning all levels of the organization/system with the model.

How will it be different from CAPP/Katie A?

The goal is to develop a practice model that builds on the great work already taking place by integrating key elements of existing initiatives and proven practices including CAPP and Katie A. Specifically, the work will include:

- A review of the Theoretical Frameworks of the Katie A. Shared Core Practice Model and the California Partners for Permanency (CAPP) Core Practice Model as well as other key practices employed in counties in California.
- Alignment of the key and common elements of those practices and practice models.

How will this effort align and coordinate with the Common Core that is in development?

CalSWEC is involved with many emerging and existing child welfare practices and initiatives and will work to:

- Develop curriculum that integrates the changes underway to streamline and improve practice in California.
- Incorporate the core elements into their final Common Core Curriculum as these efforts move toward finalization.

When will we be implementing it?

We are in the beginning stages of the development process, which is envisioned to take place over the next 2 years.

At this point we have:

- Established and convened a Core Practice Model Design Team with Child Welfare leaders from a range of California counties.
- Created and convened sub-committees focused on practice model development, communications, and outreach and engagement.

The development process will focus on:

- Building understanding and forging agreements on the core elements.
- Developing a consistent statewide approach that allows for county flexibility.

Who will be participating in the development?

County Leaders, the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), and the Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC) are working together initially to gather information and develop foundational material. In addition, they will be conducting:

- Outreach, engagement, and involvement of key decision-makers and stakeholders from a variety of regions and backgrounds throughout California.
- Regional and statewide outreach activities to gather input from various agency and community partners.

What support will counties have to implement the California Practice Model?

Once implementation begins:

- Counties will work with their affiliated training organizations to identify supports needed to implement the model.
- CalSWEC, CFPIC, and the training academies that have participated in the model development process will be prepared to support implementation.

Preparation for the implementation of the practice model could include:

- Discussing changes with supervisors and other staff as well as community partners and providers.
- Explaining the value of an overarching model and shared practice expectations.
- Working with staff and partners to identify system barriers in their work with children and families and taking steps to address those barriers.