



Together for a better future for Kern County's children FY 2019-20 Annual Report

Strengthening Families and Communities For 28 Years

Established by the Kern County Board of Supervisors in 1992, the Kern County Network for Children (KCNC) proudly continues its mission to protect and enrich the lives of children in Kern County.

What Makes KCNC Unique

- Assists in collaborative planning and coordination of services to children and families.
- Supports Kern's Child Welfare Services Self Improvement Plan and operates The Dream Center, a one-stop for foster youth.
- Assists growth of effective family support programs by providing support, high quality training, and evaluation services.
- Serves as Kern's Child Abuse Prevention Council.
- Develops community leadership.

Child Abuse in Kern County: What Our Community Needs to Know

The prevention of child abuse and neglect is a community responsibility. It can be a matter of life and death. To report abuse or neglect, call the 24 hour, 7 days per week hotline at (661) 631-6011, (760) 375-6049 or dial 911.

Did You Know:

- **15,079** Kern County children were suspected of being abused or neglected —**41** children each day in 2019.
- **2,741**, an average of 8 children everyday, were later found to be victims of abuse or neglect in 2019.
- About **30%** of abused or neglected children **will later abuse their own children**, continuing the horrible cycle of abuse.
- In 2019, **2 child fatalities** which were determined to be abuse/neglect by law enforcement or the Coroner; and 14 severe/serious injuries due to abuse or neglect.





2019/20 Achievements

By providing child abuse prevention education and awareness services; administering supportive services to families most at-risk of experiencing child abuse and neglect; and harnessing the power of community action toward meeting the critical needs of Kern County’s children and families, the Kern County Network for Children is helping to improve child safety outcomes for children and families in these three areas:

AWARENESS:

We raise awareness of child abuse and methods to prevent it so communities take action.

- Child well being and safety messaging from the Kern County Network for Children were the focus of 10 media stories reaching media stories reaching an audience of 397,980 community members via radio, television and/or print ads.
- 78 agencies, schools, and community groups were represented at 9 trainings addressing child welfare issues with an average of 71 attendees per training.
- 92% of training attendees found Kern County Network for Children trainings beneficial and 90% reported that they plan to use the information presented.

ASSISTANCE:

We work with community partners to offer effective prevention, intervention, and treatment programs for families who are at-risk of or who have experienced child abuse/neglect.

- 2,812 families and 7,507 children received services from Differential Response (DR) programs during the FY 2019-20 fiscal year.
- 1,703 families and their 4,705 children received comprehensive DR case management services in the FY 2019-20.
- 257 parents received court ordered parenting instruction with a 68% FY 2019-20 completion rate.
- 12 of 35 parents successfully completed the new PRAXES program services, implemented in 2019-20. Four families reunified with their 12 children during the time period. Data for 2019-20 showed that parental stress decreased by an average of 12 percent.

ADVOCACY:

We strengthen the community’s response to child maltreatment and foster youth through knowledge and leadership development.

- 40 service providers from 21 local agencies/organizations have begun the *2020 Kern County Network for Children’s Leadership Development Class*.—which will continue once group assembly safely resumes.
- 12 Kern County Network for Children Accredited Community Collaboratives receive technical assistance services including recently re-adapted Collaborative Coordinator calls monthly.
- A monthly average of 77 providers 76 from local agencies, schools, and community groups attend monthly *Kern County Network for Children General Collaborative Meetings* to network and resource share.

Kern’s Differential Response (DR) & Welfare-to-Work (WTW) Programs Partner to Increase Family Income & Self-Sufficiency

Poverty is the single best predictor of child abuse and neglect. Children who live in families with an annual income less than \$15,000 are 22 times more likely to be abused or neglected than children living in families with an annual income of \$30,000 or more (Children’s Defense Fund, 2005). Most families referred to Differential Response earned under \$19,790 annually during the FY 2019-20 (72%).

DR & WTW Programs Share Desired Outcomes

Welfare To Work (WTW) helps parents prepare for work, gain employment, and become self-sufficient. DR case managers incorporated WTW plan activities into DR Family Care Plans to help parents comply with WTW program requirements and assisted parents who were WTW sanctioned with curing their sanctions. DR clients also received referrals to needed services to remove barriers to employment and avoid financial sanctions, and were provided supportive services such as encouragement, problem solving, transportation, accompanying clients to appointments, and follow-up.

During FY 2019-20 **24%** of sanctioned DR families “lifted” their WTW sanction during case management. These families can now actively participate in the WTW program with the goal of becoming self-sufficient.





A Strategic Investment Kern County's Differential Response

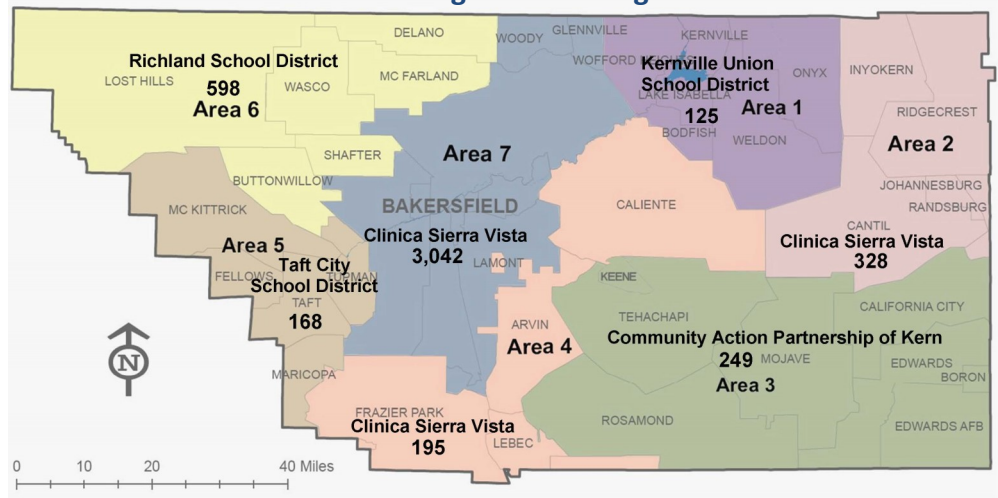
Differential Response (DR) expands the ability of Child Protective Services (CPS) to respond differently to suspected reports of child abuse/neglect, by assisting families at the first signs of trouble. CPS Social Workers assess the referrals received and designate their safety risk level as either Path 1 (lowest), 2 or 3 (highest). Trained community-based organizations provide integrated case management. A Service Area approach is used to minimize administrative costs and ensure that DR services are available countywide.



My Case Manager has been the most helpful person I have ever met. She is one of a kind. Thank you for not being judgmental. Thank you for not being judgmental. You were there for me when I needed you and even when I didn't. I am going to miss you very much.

- DR Case Managed Parent

Number of Kern County Children Receiving DR Case Management During FY 19-20



DR Improves Child Welfare Service Outcomes

- **2,812** families and **7,507** children received direct services from DR programs during FY 2019-20.
- **1,703** families and their **4,705** children received comprehensive DR case management services during FY 2019-20, of these:
 - **71%** of case managed families exited with completed case plans.
 - **99%** of client families were satisfied with the DR case management services they received.

County Partnership Benefits DR Prevention Services

In the fall of 2012, the Kern County Board of Supervisors approved the first time use of County General Funds towards child abuse prevention. County funding allows DR to reach all families throughout Metro Bakersfield who are referred by CPS.

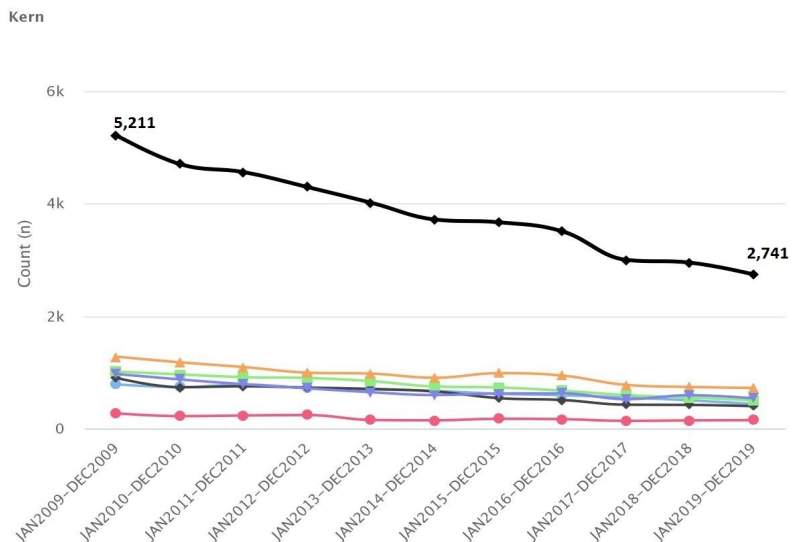
Metro Bakersfield DR Path 1 Referrals

- **748** families and **1,871** children received DR services.
- **435** families and **1,221** children participated in DR case management services.
- **76%** of case managed Path 1 families exited with completed case plans.

The California Child Welfare Indicators

Project report on Child Maltreatment Substantiation Rates for 2009—2019 shows a steady decrease in the number of substantiated cases in Kern County.

In calendar year 2019, of those children with substantiated cases were: 537 under age 1, 398 aged 1-2 years, 501 aged 3-5 years, 721 aged 6-10 years, 537 aged 11-15 years and 149 aged 16-17 years.



Making a Difference For Current & Former Foster Youth



1801 & 1807 19th Street

Our Partners...



Established in 2008, the Dream Center, named by founding foster youth who helped design service delivery, is Kern's only one-stop resource center for foster youth up to the age of 25.

Housing Assistance Service Outcomes for Homeless Youth

- **61** homeless youth were housed. Of them, **2** were pregnant and **12** were parenting and housed with a combined number of **20** children.
- **70%** of housed youth have successfully maintained their housing.
- Of the youth exiting housing assistance services, **11 (58%)** of the youth voluntarily withdrew, **7 (37%)** successfully completed the length of case management services required by their housing program and are independently housed now, and **1 (5%)** was terminated from their housing program.

DREAM CENTER BY THE NUMBERS:

- **753** youth visited Dream Center (unduplicated count).
- **7,814** snack bags were distributed to an average of **200** youth a week/**40** youth a day.
- **893** hygiene kits & **373** emergency food bags distributed.
- **1,647** computer uses.
- **1,055** youth received clothing & shoes donated by the community.
- **291** showers and **164** washer/dryer uses.
- **451** youth attended skill building workshops.

The Dream Center was closed 3/19/20—5/31/20 due to California's COVID-19 Shelter In Place.

YOUTH THRIVE

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

95% of the **61** youth who participated in Leadership activities reported increases in research based Protective and Promotive Factors they need to thrive.

Kern County Network for Children (KCNC)

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