



BUILDING A HEALTHY COMMUNITY FOR OUR KIDS

Kern County's Children FY 2022-23 Annual Report

Strengthening Families and Communities For 31 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.

KCNC is committed to the well-being of our children and families by:

- ◆ Using a collaborative approach to create and implement innovative services to benefit children and families.
- ◆ Assisting lead agencies in developing and implementing the Kern County Self Assessment and Kern Self Improvement Plan to ensure services meet critical needs, are well designed, and help improve Child Welfare Service outcomes.
- ◆ Ensuring current and former foster youth, up to age 24, have access to essential services and resources to help them transition to adulthood. The KCNC Dream Center is a one stop resource for housing, education, employment, transportation, and more.
- ◆ Engaging individuals with lived experience to improve the quality and impact of services, and ability to develop approaches to reach those in need effectively.
- ◆ Providing the platform for agencies to come together to share information, resources and collaborate to bridge services for families.
- ◆ Serving as Kern's Child Abuse Prevention Council and Coordinating Council for Child and Family Services.
- ◆ Continuing a legacy of leadership by offering future leaders the opportunity to learn from public service mentors.

Supporting Families is Key: You Can Make the Difference!

Encouraging families to seek help can make the difference in keeping families safe and together. **The prevention of child abuse and neglect is a community responsibility.** To report suspected abuse or neglect, call the 24 hour, 7 days per week hotline at (661) 631-6011, (760) 375-6049 or dial 911. **It can be a matter of life and death.**



Did You Know:

- ◆ *Children ages zero to five are most vulnerable and most likely to die of a child abuse and neglect homicide.*
- ◆ *14,103 Kern County children were suspected of being abused or neglected - an average of 39 children each day in 2022.*
- ◆ *2,893 - an average of 8 Kern County children everyday, were found to be victims of abuse or neglect in 2022.*
- ◆ *In 2022, 1 child fatality was determined to be a result of abuse/neglect by law enforcement or the coroner ; and 19 children sustained severe/serious injuries due to abuse or neglect.*



2022-2023 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.

- Bringing awareness to the community on critical issues around the safety and well-being of children is at the forefront of KCNC. Information reached **706,861** community members through print, TV, and radio news outlets.
- An average of **94** service providers and community members attended **9** trainings aimed at providing knowledge and tools to successfully help strengthen families, increase child safety, and access ever changing resources.
- A total of **10** General Collaborative meetings were held to address critical issues affecting Kern families and promote networking amongst the **96** agencies throughout Kern County that attended. An average of **75** stakeholders attended each meeting.

DIRECT SERVICES:

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

- **3,905** families at-risk of experiencing child abuse and/or neglect received Differential Response services countywide. **99%** were satisfied with services.
- **303** parents received evidence-based and/or evidence-informed parenting education services. **92 (30%)** of parents successfully completed and graduated classes. **123 (41%)** dropped/did not complete their class, and **88 (29%)** remained enrolled.
- **13** families who successfully reunified from foster care received Parent As Teachers Program supportive services.

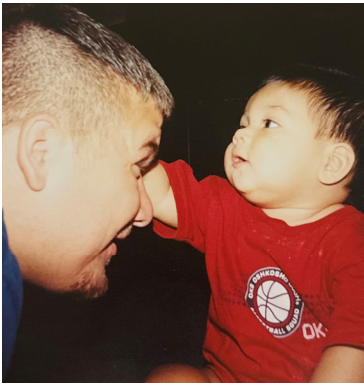
NETWORK DEVELOPMENT:

We strengthen the community's response to child maltreatment and foster youth through knowledge, building collaborative partnerships, and leadership development.

- **18** Collaboratives and **16** Family Resource Centers throughout Kern County were actively working to help improve safety and well being of their community or target population (e.g. Veterans, special needs groups, etc.).
- All **13** Kern County Network for Children accredited community collaboratives continued to maintain their accreditation and receive on-going technical assistance services.
- **13** Dream Center partner agencies and organizations worked hand in hand to support current and former foster youth.

Evolving Prevention Services

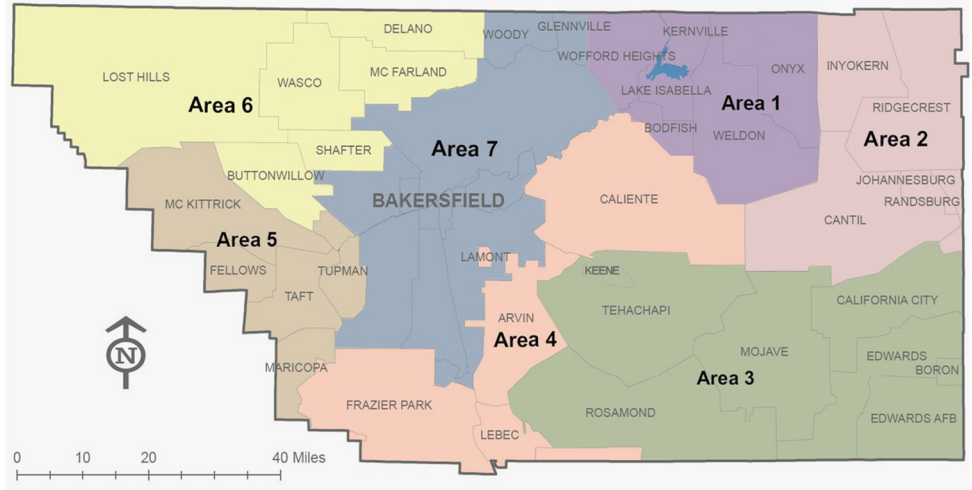
- Differential Response (DR) program provides engagement, home visits, basic goods, linkage to resources available throughout the community when needed, and emphasized family strengths, as well as identifying areas where families have room to grow with support. Goals for success are identified by using an evidence-based assessments called the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS).
- The NCFAS tool measures the family functioning during the opening of the case, at 90 days, and when family is exiting the DR program. During FY 2022-2023, for all families exiting the DR program, there were **82%** at or above baseline for Child Well Being, **78%** at or above baseline for Self Sufficiency, and **80%** at or above baseline for Family Health.
- When families meet their goals and improve family functioning, they reduce the likelihood of a reoccurring referral.
- PAT is an evidence-based program that services are client driven, provide in-home support, teach coping and life skills, demonstrate parenting techniques, and assist with nurturing parent/child bonding/attachment, PAT has demonstrated effectiveness in improving child safety.
- During FY 2022-2023, Parent As Teachers (PAT) services were piloted by Henrietta Weill Memorial Child Guidance Clinic and was implemented for post-reunification families in central Bakersfield area. There were **46** referrals received, a total of **13** families were served, and **22** children obtained PAT services.
- In FY 2023-2024 PAT services will be expanding and will be implemented through out all of Kern County. Henrietta Weill Memorial Child Guidance Clinic will be serving Central Kern and Clinica Sierra Vista will be serving Eastern Kern.



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 families with comprehensive supportive services.

Differential Response Services A Total of 3,905 Families Were Served During FY 22-23



Our Case Manager was a blessing for our family. Helping me move forward in my path of providing a great home for our family, support for our future, and a healthier and safer lifestyle.

- DR Parent

DR Improves Child Welfare Service Outcomes

- **3,905** families received direct services from DR programs.
- **2,694** families received comprehensive DR case management services, of these:
 - **21%** parents/caretakers receiving CalWORKs cash aid who were sanctioned cured their sanction, increased their income, and began fully participating in their Welfare To Work plan to become self sufficient.
 - **67%** of case managed families increased family functioning, as measured by the North Carolina Family Assessment Scale, an evidenced based assessment tool, and exited successfully with completed case plans.

The California Child Welfare Indicators Project's

Child Maltreatment substantiation rate data for 2009-2022 shows a steady decrease of in the number of substantiated referrals in Kern County by 49%.

In 2022, there were 2,893 children with substantiations: 488 under age 1, 358 ages 1-2 years, 476 ages 3-5 years, 804 ages 6-10 years, 606 ages 11-15 years and 161 ages 16-17 years.

FY 22-23 Referrals Provided by DR

Total Referrals Provided	4,603
Childcare	48
Community Involvement	1,268
Condition of Children	124
Drug/Alcohol	26
Employment	73
Family Relations	112
Food/Nutrition	163
Health Care	269
Housing	337
Income/Budget	192
Mental Health	567
Other	1,362
Transportation	62

Together Creating Possibilities for Current & Former Foster Youth

Our Partners...



Meet KCNC's Peer Support Specialist, they are individuals with lived experience. Peer Support Specialist walk alongside youth and provide the support, encouragement, and helping hand they need to become successful.



Dream Center Highlights

KCNC Dream Center provides outreach and case management services to foster youth and emancipated youth that may be experiencing homelessness up to the age of 24. Below are some of the FY 2022-2023 outcomes:

- Homeless Outreach services: **139** youth served, including **19** of their young children. **39%** of adults had increased or sustained employment income. Of the **106**-youth exiting, **89** or **84%** exited to positive housing. **19** or **18%** of the **106** exited to independent housing without subsidy.
- Homeless Case Management services: **91** youth served, including **31** of their young children. **55%** of adults have increased or sustained employment income. Out of the **16** youth exiting **11** or **73%** exited to positive housing destinations. **3** youth exited services early and are living in their unit with no ongoing housing subsidy due to having earned income.

The KCNC Dream Center spearheaded efforts alongside partner agencies to assist current/former foster youth with filing their taxes through the John Burton Tax challenge. The goal of the challenge was to increase economic stability among current and former foster youth by promoting the newly created Foster Youth Tax Credit. Statewide, **8.7%** of eligible youth received the credit; In Kern County, it was almost double: **14.7%**. Thanks to the collaboration across agencies Kern County won the challenge against other counties statewide in comparable populations.

Youth are experiencing many barriers when trying to access appropriate health care. Through youth feedback and collaboration KCNC Dream Center partnered with Vision to Learn, a non-profit based in Los Angeles, CA. Vision to Learn brought a mobile eye care clinic to the Dream Center providing youth with vision screenings, eye examinations, and prescription eyeglasses at no cost to the youth and with no need for health coverage. Thanks to the collaboration and support of local agencies over **30** youth were able to receive prescription glasses.

Dream Center Numbers:

During FY 2022-2023, the KCNC Dream Center saw more youth than in previous years; serving over **800** unduplicated youth throughout the fiscal year with a wide-range of services.

- **7,998** Snack Bags
- **579** Emergency Food Bags
- **1,310** Hygiene Kits
- **2,169** Clothing Items



Kern County Network for Children
Our Children. Our Community.

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