

# Continuum of Care Reform

## a better foster care system!

### FAMILIES NOT FACILITIES

- ❖ **The goal of CCR is for every youth to be able to live in a family style home whenever possible.** Some youth will still stay in group homes if there isn't another safe option for them.
- ❖ **The rules for Group Homes are changing.** Many group homes will stay open and change to meet new standards, and some will close.
- ❖ **Your living situation won't suddenly change** on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017.
- ❖ **No matter what changes happen, you will help decide where you will live** if that is needed.
- ❖ **If you move out of a group home, you might have questions about what it is like to live in other types of places.** The people on your team are there to answer your questions about life in a family type of home and will help you get ready to move there.
- ❖ **Your relatives, foster parents, and potential adoptive parents will still be here,** they will just be called Resource Families and they will all have to meet the same new standards as each other.

### THE NEW WORDS OF CCR

- ❖ **CCR-Continuum of Care Reform** is the name of Assembly Bill 403 and Assembly Bill 1997, a law that passed in October 2015. The goal of the law is to improve the foster care system.
- ❖ **STRTP- Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program** is the new name for group homes who change to meet the new standards.
- ❖ **Resource Family** is the new name for foster families, relative caregivers, and potential adoptive families.
- ❖ **Home Based Settings** are places resource families live, like apartments, houses, mobile homes, etc. Basically, they are places that are NOT a residential or group home style place to live.
- ❖ **Child and Family Team Meetings** are where people on your team (your family, social worker/probation officer, foster parents, and others) meet to make decisions with you about your life- like where you go to school, where you live, what activities you are part of, ect.

### LESS MOVING TO NEW HOMES

- ❖ **Services come to you if you need something new,** so you don't have to move again just because you have a new need.
- ❖ **All resource families will have to take a "permanency assessment"** which is an assessment that only adoptive parents had to take before CCR. This does not mean that all resource families plan to adopt.



Youth Engagement Project  
[www.cfpic.org/projects/yep](http://www.cfpic.org/projects/yep)



## YOUR VOICE MATTERS!

- ❖ **People are listening!** The California Department of Social Services and others want to know what you think about how to best put CCR into action.
- ❖ **Ask questions and share your ideas.** Talk with your worker or email [ccr@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ccr@dss.ca.gov).
- ❖ **Contact a youth engagement organization** like California Youth Connection ([www.calyouth.conn.org](http://www.calyouth.conn.org)) or Youth Engagement Project ([www.cfpic.org/projects/yep](http://www.cfpic.org/projects/yep)).

## Who Do You Want in Your Life?

- ❖ **A focus of CCR is for all youth to have a lifetime connection.** This does not have to be legal permanency (like adoption). CCR includes people you feel close to, who you want in your life forever, even if they are not a legal guardian or adoptive parent.

## CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM MEETINGS

- ❖ **Child and Family Team Meetings are there to give you a voice in your life!** CCR requires Child and Family Team Meetings, where you can tell your team about your needs and wants.
- ❖ **You have a say about who is in your Child and Family Team Meetings.** You can tell your team if there are other important people you want to have at your meetings- they are YOUR meetings.
- ❖ **Your services should work together** based on what your needs are, not based on where you live. These meetings are an important way your team communicates with each other and makes sure everyone is working together.

## MY THOUGHTS

- ❖ **Who can I talk with about CCR?** \_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ **My biggest hopes for CCR are** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ **My biggest worries about CCR are** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- ❖ **This is how CCR might affect MY life** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Youth Engagement Project

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### **Can we talk about your future, and the future of foster care in California?** *Making Sense of Continuum of Care Reform (CCR)*



*As a youth who spent 18 years in foster care, I can say that one of the most important things was being able to trust the adults who were 100% transparent, keeping us in the loop on issues that affect us. Adults can build trust with us and set the standard for honesty when they tell us that they don't know everything, but that they will share what they do know. So in regards to CCR, even if you don't have all the answers, tell us that, we will understand. What we really need to hear is that CCR is something to improve foster care and reform it for the better.*

*~Alexis Barries, Project Associate*

Youth have shared that most of their peers will be affected by the topic of CCR either directly or vicariously and the information is potentially traumatizing. As such, treat conversations about CCR as you would any possibly traumatizing topic. Following are the conversations and “key messages” youth tell us they need to have about CCR right now with the caring adults in their lives, and with each other. Youth have also said that everyone on their team needs to know about CCR so that everyone is on the same page.

#### **Have you heard anything about CCR? If so what have you heard?**

Start by talking about the *purpose* of CCR- We are working with youth and lots of other people to improve the foster care system. One way of doing that is to make certain every child/youth in a group home has a plan that works for them and makes sure they get support in their future.

#### **Have you heard anything about changes to the group home you are staying in?**

Group Homes will be making improvements to better serve youth. Their new name will be Short Term Residential Therapeutic Program (STRTP). Youth will live in STRTPs the shortest amount of time possible until they are able to move to a Home Based Setting.

#### **So what are Resource Families and what is a Home Based Setting?**

Resource Family is the new name for all families who care for children in foster care. Whether you are related or not, families will be called Resource Families and be treated equally. They will also get the same amount of training and support. Another word for this type of home is Home Based Setting.

#### **What is life like in a Home Based Setting/Resource Family?**

If you have never lived in a Home Based Setting before, you might be worried because it is different than the group homes you are used to. You will have lots of support and can ask your team specific questions so they can give you as much information as possible.

#### **What does it mean for you?**

Changes begin to start on January 1st 2017, but where you live will not suddenly change. You may not notice any changes. If there are changes for you, you will be a part of making decisions during a Child and Family Team Meeting. Your Child and Family Team Meeting is a great place to start getting answers and giving your ideas about what is best!

### **What does permanency mean in CCR?**

There will be a lot of focus on getting you connected with someone “permanent.” This may not be legal permanency, like adoption or guardianship, but it does mean finding an adult who you want to keep in your life and develop a very close relationship with. You get to help decide what your goals are for permanency at your Child and Family Team Meetings. You will not be forced into adoption.

### **Your Voice Matters**

As part of this change, you will be invited to talk about what you need in Child and Family Team Meetings on an ongoing basis. This makes sure everyone who cares about you listens to you and works with each other.

### **We hope you will move less.**

Sometimes your needs change. In the past we would have looked for a new home for you when your needs changed. Now you can stay where you are and the services and supports will come to you!

### **Have something to say? People are listening!**

The California Department of Social Services and others want to know what you think about how to best put CCR into action. Ask questions and share your ideas. Talk with your worker or email [ccr@dss.ca.gov](mailto:ccr@dss.ca.gov). Contact a youth engagement organization like *California Youth Connection* at [calyouthconn.org](http://calyouthconn.org) or *Youth Engagement Project* at [cfpic.org/projects/yep](http://cfpic.org/projects/yep) to get involved.

## **Recommended People and Places for Talking with Youth About CCR**

Youth shared that the following people and places are good options for initiating conversations about CCR. They suggested that these are places youth are likely to feel safe in, be attracted to, and/or where they have already developed relationships with informed adults.

- ❖ Child and Family Team Meetings/Team Decision Making Meetings
- ❖ Independent Living Program (ILP) classes
- ❖ School (counselors)
- ❖ Meetings with Probation Officers
- ❖ Conferences/ Summits held for youth such as Transitional Aged Youth (TAY) summits held in each county
- ❖ Youth radio stations- <https://youthradio.org>
- ❖ Emancipation Meetings/conferences
- ❖ Monthly social worker visits
- ❖ Therapy sessions

*Special Thanks to the San Mateo Youth Advisory Board for sharing their ideas, and to Lisa Molinar, Shared Vision Consultants for assistance with drafting this document.*