



Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Jun 20, 2025

Re: Securing California's Investments in Trauma-Informed Care by Saving ACEs Aware

Dear Governor Newsom,

Our organizations are writing in response to the Legislature's proposed State Budget and the impact on our state's first-in-the-nation investments in trauma-informed care for low-income children and families. We were pleased with the legislature's choice to **increase investments in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Aware to \$20M for next year and hope that you will agree with this proposal in final negotiations.** This funding would be sufficient to sustain the program for another year, which will have significant benefits for the long-term health and well-being of California's families. The ACEs Aware program is essential for training providers in trauma-informed care, increasing access to specialty mental health services for families, and improving patient-provider relationships and outcomes, including reducing experiences of stigma, medical discrimination, and reluctance to engage with the healthcare system.

There is an escalating mental health crisis among our state's children and youth. This has been exacerbated by recent events and increased threats to the safety of immigrant individuals and their families. One in five of our state's children live in mixed-status families and are currently experiencing heightened levels of

stress, trauma, and risk for future disease as a result of the federal administration's choice to continue to violently separate children, families, and their communities. The ACEs Aware program is a necessary mental health intervention that has played a critical role in connecting clinics, communities, community-based organizations, and managed care plans.

The program has had many accomplishments, as documented by the [independent research group, RAND](#), including improvements in patient outcomes and healthcare provider capacity to better serve marginalized communities and families. The first-in-the-nation initiative has had a profound influence on the rest of the country as a model for similar programs. As such, we commend your office for its initial commitment to the ACEs Aware initiative and hope that you will agree with the Legislature's choice to further prioritize advancing trauma-informed systems of care across California. We are eager to collaborate as thought partners in securing long-term investment in upstream prevention, and **we strongly urge you to approve \$20 million in state funding for ACEs Aware.**

Sincerely,

Around Birth Collective
CA Alliance of Child and Family Services
California Black Women's Health Project
California School-Based Health Alliance
Child Care Resource Center
Children's Institute
The Children's Partnership
End Child Poverty CA powered by GRACE
First 5 Association
First 5 California
Healing and Justice Center
Innereity Struggle
Insure the Uninsured Project

The Los Angeles Trust for Children's Health
National Center for Youth Law

Cc: Secretary Kim Johnson,
California Health and Human Services Agency

Assembly Member Robert Rivas
Speaker of California Assembly

Senator Mike McGuire
Senate President pro Tempore

Senator Scott Wiener, Chair
Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee

Senator Akilah Weber, Chair
Senate Budget Subcommittee 3, Health and Human Services

Assembly Member Jesse Gabriel, Chair
Assembly Budget Committee

Assembly Member Dawn Addis, Chair
Assembly Budget Subcommittee 1, Health