



# Data Playbook for Prevention Action Planning

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



**Safe & Sound**  
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# Executive Summary

“I think it’s about helping families before it gets to child welfare. We need leadership from our system (public) partners, private agencies and the community to support and strengthen our families.”

— David Swanson Hollinger  
Senior Program Manager,  
Ventura Children and Family  
Services and Co-Chair,  
Prevention and Early  
Intervention Committee of the  
California Child Welfare Council

The stars are aligned to put prevention of child maltreatment and family strengthening front and center. With California’s participation in the [Family First Prevention Services Act](#) and enactment of [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 153](#), counties have a renewed opportunity to create prevention plans with community partners. Additionally, increased public awareness, new legislation, and policymaker support have inspired county leaders and community partners to engage in developing comprehensive prevention action plans. Understanding and using data is a critical element to an effective, meaningful, and measurable plan.

To help county teams create effective prevention plans, we have developed this *Data Playbook for Prevention Action Planning* to guide you through the essential steps for selecting a data framework, gathering relevant quantitative and qualitative data, applying the most appropriate analysis techniques, and sharing data and stories to engage communities and key stakeholders in this important process to strengthen families.

## WHO SHOULD USE THE DATA PLAYBOOK

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The Data Playbook for Prevention Action Planning was created by and for **cross-system prevention planning teams**, including those related to AB 153, who are developing comprehensive county plans to strengthen families and prevent child maltreatment. Key to developing these plans is to authentically engage representation from a broad group of stakeholders, including those with lived experience.

County prevention planning teams are generally co-chaired by leadership from child welfare and the county’s child abuse prevention council (CAPC), and should also include other involved and responsible system leaders, tribal representation where appropriate, as well as leadership from private service providers and community-based organizations.

## Prevention Planning Teams\*

### PUBLIC AGENCIES / SYSTEM LEADERS

- LEAD:** Child Welfare
- Behavioral Health
  - Department of Housing
  - Department of Labor
  - Department of Transportation
  - Office of Education (early childhood, K-12)
  - Probation
  - Public Health
  - Regional Centers
  - Tribal Leaders

### PRIVATE AGENCIES / COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS / ADVOCATES

- LEAD:** Child Abuse Prevention Centers
- Community Child Care Councils
  - Cultural Navigators
  - Domestic Violence Shelters
  - Faith-Based Organizations
  - First 5 Commissions
  - Foster Family Agencies
  - Parent Partners
  - Substance Use Treatment Centers
  - Youth Advocates with Lived Expertise

\*This is a suggested list noting that some counties may have additional representatives on their teams.

## WHY USE THE DATA PLAYBOOK

Everyone on your prevention planning team has a unique role in interacting with data to inform action. Leaders have a responsibility to model critical thinking for their teams, setting a tone of discernment and asking the right questions.

Staff members who work directly with community members or populations living in vulnerable circumstances must think critically about where the data comes from, what they can learn from it, and what they can do with it.

This guide provides all members of the prevention planning team with the **tools they need** to effectively use data to strengthen your child maltreatment prevention efforts. When used well, data has the power to enable greater clarity, improve communication and support a more efficient use of resources, with the goal of a stronger and healthier community where our children thrive.

**“When we think about data, it really starts with leadership and training leaders. If I’m not asking the question, my team wouldn’t look for answers to that question.”**

— Tracie Neal, Chief Probation Officer, Shasta County Probation Department

## HOW TO USE THE DATA PLAYBOOK

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One of your first “plays” in using data for prevention planning is deciding on a **data framework** to guide your selection of indicators of community strengths and needs.

### The Data Playbook includes definitions of some established frameworks with pros and cons, including:

- Social Determinants of Health
- The Center for the Study of Social Policy’s Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework
- The Building Community Resilience Model
- The Adverse Community Experiences and Resilience Framework

### Using the Data Playbook for Prevention Action Planning

The Data Playbook provides a list of the most commonly cited indicators that can be used to describe community conditions (e.g. economic stability, housing, access to mental health care, etc.), and notes specific data points used to measure these indicators for counties across California.

The Data Playbook also calls out some critical caveats for collecting new data, one of the most important of which is that many public data sources tend to focus on deficits (e.g., crime rates), so your prevention planning team may need to make a conscious effort to find or collect data about community assets or strengths (e.g. education levels).

“It is both important and respectful to understand the challenges parents face. By collecting community level data, county planning efforts will have a better chance at keeping families safe and together.”

— Roger De Leon, Parent Partner, Riverside County Children’s Services and member of the California Child Welfare Council

## Data collection methods: existing (secondary) data

The Data Playbook provides a **curated list of existing data sources**, which include:

- [California Child Welfare Indicators Project \(CCWIP\)](#)
- [California Health and Human Services County Health Statuses Profiles](#)
- [Casey Community Opportunity Map](#)
- [Children Now County Scorecard](#)
- [KidsData](#)
- [PolicyMap](#)
- [Prosperity Now Scorecard](#)
- [Strong Start Index](#)
- [The Economics of Child Abuse: A Study of California & its Counties](#)
- [US Census American Community Survey Narrative Profiles](#)

## Data collection methods: new (primary) data

The Data Playbook also walks through the details of common pitfalls in **collecting new data** that can sabotage both your collection process and the accuracy of the data collected. It then provides guidance on some of the best methods for engaging stakeholders and communities in the data gathering process, including considerations for when and how to use each.

### DATA COLLECTION RISKS

- Representativeness
- Accessibility
- Fatigue
- Trust

### METHODS FOR COLLECTING NEW DATA

- Key informant interviews
- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Community meetings
- Asset mapping
- PhotoVoice
- Community cafés

“I’m not a big data person, but what I have come to recognize is that the ‘a-ha’ is the story it tells. When I think about data as a story, then I get excited about it. This is an important message to help folks get on board.”

— Carol Carillo, Executive Director, Child Abuse Prevention Council of Contra Costa County

## Using the Data Playbook to turn data into action

Once you have the framework and data, the Data Playbook offers tools for disaggregating the data into meaningful data sets to more effectively address the questions you are trying to answer.

Moving from data to engagement and decision making can be one of the most challenging—yet most essential—steps in this process. Most people who have worked with large amounts of data have experienced the frustration of having reached important conclusions, but not knowing quite how to bring others along on the data journey.

In order to communicate the data, the playbook walks readers through some key principles for data visualization and storytelling, helping you communicate insights from data and the importance of your prevention plan.

## MOVING FORWARD

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Just like any skill, it takes practice to build good data habits and practices. We hope the *Data Playbook for Prevention Action Planning* will be your go-to guide for working out your data “muscles,” helping you make decisions and create stronger prevention action plans.

Together, the team and community stakeholders are using the data to move toward the best outcomes for our communities.

The complete *Data Playbook for Prevention Action Planning* is available at <https://economics.safeandsound.org/playbook>

**“We are so fortunate in Sacramento to have great participation from our public and private partners. We have almost the same structure for our AB2083 Child and Family Continuum of Care Interagency Leadership Team and we are currently working on a data dashboard that tracks outcomes across systems and looks at how we can each support each other’s desired outcomes.”**

—Michelle Callejas,  
Director of Child, Family  
and Adult Services,  
Sacramento County