

INTER-AGENCY COUNCIL ON CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT (ICAN)



The Inter-Agency Council on Child Abuse and Neglect (ICAN) was established in 1977 by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. ICAN serves as the official County agent to coordinate development of services for the prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect. It is the largest county-based child abuse and neglect network in the nation. ICAN has been Co-Chaired by the Los Angeles County Sheriff and the Los Angeles County District Attorney. ICAN staff are budgeted within the Executive Office of DCFS.

ICAN consists of 32 County, City, State and Federal agencies at the department head level, professional/line level, 5 appointees from the Board of Supervisors and 12 community-based interdisciplinary child abuse councils. In addition, ICAN has a non-profit partner, **ICAN Associates**, comprised of volunteer business and community members who raise funds and public awareness for programs and issues identified by ICAN. ICAN also was designated as the National Center on Child Fatality Review in 1996.

ICAN's activities are carried out through a variety of committees comprised of both public sector and private sector professionals with expertise in child abuse/neglect. These committees address critical issues affecting the well-being of the most vulnerable children. Major ICAN Committees include:

- the Policy Committee
- Operations Committee
- Child Death Review Team and Annual Report
- Child and Adolescent Suicide Review Team
- Data/Information Sharing and Annual Report
- Cyber Crime Prevention
- Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) Victim Services Committee
- Child Abduction and Reunification
- Child Safety in Child Custody Cases
- Family and Children's Index
- AB 1733/AB 2994 Planning and Funding Recommendations
- Safe Sleep for Infants Campaign
- Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Baby Law Management and Annual Report
- Guidelines for Effective Response to Domestic Abuse (GERDA)
- ICAN Training Priority Committee
- ICAN Hospital Network
- ICAN Crisis Response Task Force

ICAN provides advice and guidance on public policy development and program implementation to improve the community's collective ability to meet the needs of abused and at-risk children. ICAN has a unique ability to bring both department head level and line level professional staff together to work collaboratively, including an ability to hold forums where staff from different agencies share information and learn about the roles each agency plays in the prevention of child abuse/neglect. As a result of these forums, staff from multiple agencies and community advocates develop a much deeper understanding of the broad system required to effectively combat child abuse and family violence.

ICAN produces three major annual reports: The State of Child Abuse in Los Angeles County, the Report of the Child Death Review Team, and the report on Safely Surrendered and Abandoned Infants. ICAN also produces five major training events: the NEXUS Conference, Children's Traumatic Grief and Loss Conference, Cyber Crime Prevention Symposia, Child Sexual Exploitation Trainings and Child and Adolescent Suicide Prevention Trainings. ICAN also has held a number of symposia including most recently: training on the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study with a special presentation by Dr. Vincent Felitti, ICAN Hospital Network addressing relationship building with hospitals for the management of child abuse cases and lessons learned from reviews conducted by the Child Death Review Team.

ICAN recently focused on three legislative efforts: reinstating law enforcement reports of incidents of abuse to the California Child Abuse Central Index (Author: Santiago), adding a separate allegation for domestic violence to the Welfare and Institutions Code and requiring mandated child abuse and neglect training for health care providers.

ICAN's work has resulted in many positive outcomes including but not limited to:

- ✓ Successful sponsorship and passage of legislation that has: brought millions of dollars into Los Angeles County for child abuse prevention programs (CAPIT, County Children's Trust Fund), developed the Community Child Abuse Councils, created the Family and Children's Index (FCI), allowed for greater sharing of health information between medical professionals and case workers for children in the child protection and juvenile justice systems, permitted secure electronic sharing of information by two-person multidisciplinary teams, enacted drowning prevention ordinances and child product safety measures;
- ✓ In addition to legislative efforts facilitating information sharing among County agencies, ICAN has convened a number of Ad-Hoc Task Forces addressing barriers to information sharing which have impacted departmental policies – e.g., see DCFS FYI #17-35 emphasizing the requirement for DCFS to share information with law enforcement.
- ✓ Development of Protocols for the Countywide Response to Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect, Guidelines for the Effective Response to Domestic Abuse and Inter-Disciplinary Protocols for Severe Non-Fatal Child Injuries; and Guidelines for the Mentoring of Foster Youth;
- ✓ Development of a Countywide Public Awareness Campaign for Infant Safe Sleeping; resulting in a 50% decrease in the number of infant deaths due to unsafe sleeping conditions.
- ✓ The ICAN Hospital Network was created to support child abuse screening, reporting, evaluation and management in all hospitals serving Los Angeles County residents. This privately funded project will build a data tracking program and connect hospitals to the child protection system and each other for births and children under age three who are served by a hospital, Emergency Department or Inpatient Services.