

Date of Hearing: June 16, 2026

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Alex Lee, Chair
SB 557 (Hurtado) – As Amended January 5, 2026

SENATE VOTE: 39-0

SUBJECT: Child abuse: family resource centers

SUMMARY: Revises the definition of a family resource center. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Defines a “family resource center” to mean a family-friendly entity serving as a hub for multigenerational, family-centered, and family-strengthening support services that meet all of the following conditions: provided at no cost or low cost to participants; embedded in communities; culturally sensitive; reflective of, and responsive to, community needs and interests; and, to build communities of peer support for families, including kinship families.
- 2) Specifies a family resource center may be located in or administered by, different entities, including, but not limited to, a local educational agency, a community resource center, or a neighborhood resource center.

EXISTING LAW:

State law:

- 1) Defines a “family resource center” to mean an entity providing family-centered and family-strengthening services that are embedded in communities, culturally sensitive, and include cross-system collaboration to assist in transforming families and communities through reciprocity and asset development based on impact-driven and evidence-informed approaches with the goal of preventing child abuse and neglect and strengthening children and families. A family resource center may be located in, or administered by, different entities, including, but not limited to, a local educational agency, a community resource center, or a neighborhood resource center. (Welfare and Institutions Code [WIC] § 18951)
- 2) Makes legislative findings and declarations that child abuse is a growing concern in the state, and that current methods of coping with child abuse problems are resulting in family breakups that are both expensive and nonproductive to the state. Provides it is the intent of the Legislature to provide for the establishment of a State Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) to plan, improve, develop, and carry out programs and activities relating to the prevention, identification and treatment of child abuse and neglect. (WIC § 18950)
- 3) Creates OCAP within the California Department of Social Services (CDSS). (WIC § 18952)
- 4) Requires OCAP to apply for federal funding for the administration of its functions and to use these funds to do all of the following:
 - a) Provide technical assistance, either directly or through grant or contract, to public and private agencies and organizations to assist them in planning, improving, developing, and carrying out programs and activities relating to the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect;

- b) Compile training materials for personnel who are engaged or intend to engage in the prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect;
- c) Assist and provide funds for the coordination of child abuse prevention programs;
- d) Develop and establish other innovation programs in child abuse prevention where the office finds a need for the programs;
- e) Conduct research and collect data relevant to the determination of the effectiveness of child abuse prevention programs; and,
- f) Support coordination and sharing of best practices implemented by family resource centers with other agencies, when the best practices reflect strategies and outcomes that were achieved and supported by evidence-informed programs and data. (WIC § 18958)

Federal law:

- 5) Established the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) in 1974 to distribute grants to states and nonprofit organizations to improve public child protective service systems, and Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) grants to support local family support networks. (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] § 5101 *et seq.*)
- 6) Established the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) in 2018 to allow states to use uncapped Title IV-E foster care funds for evidence-based prevention services to prevent entry into foster care. (42 U.S.C. § 1305)
- 7) Defines a “family resource center” as a community or school-based hub providing support services to families, characterized by a multi-generational, strengths-based approach. These centers are required to be responsive to local needs, offer services at low or no cost, and build peer support to reduce family stress. (42 U.S.C. § 629(a))

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Committee on Appropriations on January 22, 2026:

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) anticipates one-time General Fund costs, potentially ranging from \$50,000-\$75,000, for state operations to inform counties and update materials.

COMMENTS:

Background: *Office of Child Abuse Prevention.* OCAP was established in 1978 within CDSS and serves as the state’s central hub for funding and policy aimed at preventing child maltreatment. OCAP manages federal and state grants like CAPTA and FFPSA to support local, community-led programs that assist families proactively before child welfare involvement is needed. OCAP monitors programs across California’s 58 counties and distributes educational tools to help professionals and families who are in need. Their strategy spans from public awareness campaigns for everyone to targeted intervention programs for families experiencing high stress, with the goal of keeping children safe and out of the foster care system.

For example, the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare (CEBC) is an online, searchable database funded by OCAP to help child welfare professionals identify and select evidence-based programs for families. It functions as a scientific registry that reviews,

rates, and compiles hundreds of parenting, mental health, and substance use disorder practices based on their research evidence and relevance to child safety. CEBC standardizes how programs are evaluated to ensure that public dollars are spent on effective interventions rather than unproven methods. This has become a tool for counties as they select qualifying evidence-based practices under FFPSA.

The federal Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse (federal clearinghouse) is a federal database that independently reviews and rates child welfare programs to determine if they meet the strict, evidence-based standards required for states to receive reimbursement for the cost of delivering these programs to the community. The federal clearinghouse and CEBC both serve as research registries that shape how OCAP administers FFPSA through local entities like family resource centers. Under FFPSA, the federal clearinghouse has the authority to determine which mental health, substance use, in-home parenting, and kinship navigator programs are eligible for federal reimbursement based on scientific rankings. Because OCAP is responsible for implementing these federal prevention guidelines statewide, it funds and uses the CEBC to provide a searchable registry that local communities can use to choose the right programs for their community. While the federal clearinghouse establishes allowable interventions, OCAP uses the CEBC to guide family resource centers in selecting and successfully executing the specific programs that qualify for FFPSA funding.

Through the Expansion of Family Resource Centers Grant Program, OCAP administers federal CAPTA and CBCAP funds to increase the availability of localized family services. The program awards multi-year grants to nonprofit organizations and county agencies to open new family resource center locations or expand existing operations in areas identified as under-resourced or rural. Funded centers operate as access hubs providing community-based services, which typically include parenting education classes, mental health counseling, case management, and referrals to concrete supports like housing and food assistance. This funding provides voluntary, early-intervention resources to families outside of the formal child welfare reporting system.

Family Resource Centers in California originated as grassroots, community-led programs in the late 1980s before being formally integrated into the state framework via the 1993 Early Start Program to assist families of children with developmental delays. The network expanded over the decades to address broader child maltreatment prevention, which led to family resource centers being codified into statute in 2019 by SB 436 (Hurtado), Chapter 476, Statutes of 2019.

OCAP provides funding that establishes, scales, and sustains FRCs within local communities. Operating at the state administrative level, OCAP channels federal and state prevention grants directly to these neighborhood-based hubs, which then act as the physical delivery system for proactive family support services. OCAP ensures that local centers effectively distribute aid, offer structured parenting education, and build community resilience to prevent child maltreatment before a crisis occurs.

Currently, more than 500 FRCs operate across all 58 California counties and use settings such as standalone nonprofit storefronts, school district hubs, and integrated municipal or public health clinics. Rather than traditional clinical medical licensing, family resource centers rely on the Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support managed by the National Family Support Network to evaluate operational effectiveness and program equity. While universal institutional accreditation is not a state mandate, networks like the California Family Resource Association (CFRA) formally certify organizations in these national standards, which are frequently required by state agencies to qualify for prevention grant funding.

Author’s Statement: According to the Author, “Across California, families often turn for help not after a crisis, but at the moment they feel overwhelmed, isolated, or unsure where to go. Family Resource Centers are often the first place those families find support. They are trusted, community-based hubs where parents can access guidance, peer connection, and practical services that strengthen families before problems escalate into harm.

“[This bill] updates state law to reflect this reality. By modernizing the statutory definition of Family Resource Centers, the bill recognizes the culturally responsive, low- or no-cost, and family-centered work these centers already do every day to prevent child abuse and neglect. This bill does not create new programs or mandates. It simply ensures that California’s statutes align with proven, prevention-focused practices that help families stay strong, connected, and safe.”

Equity Implications: The provisions of *this bill* update and revise the definition of a Family Resource Center to more closely align with the federal definition that was updated in 2025. The sponsors contend that current law contains an outdated and incomplete definition of family resource centers that does not reflect their modern role as prevention-focused, community-based hubs for families, nor does it align with the new federal definition of family resource centers as adopted under the Biden Administration. As a result, the sponsors contend there is inconsistency across state agencies, counties, and funding programs regarding the purpose, scope, and legitimacy of family resource centers within the child abuse prevention system. The sponsors assert this lack of clarity can weaken coordination, limit alignment with evidence-informed prevention strategies, and undermine early intervention efforts that reduce family stress before abuse or neglect occurs.

Arguments in Support: According to co-sponsors the Child Abuse Prevention Center and CFRA, “In January 2025, then President Biden signed into law HR 9076, the “Supporting America’s Families and Children Act,” which, following California’s lead, defined FRCs in federal statute for the first time in history. HR 9076 encourages states to partner with FRCs for assisting families, opening the door for future federal funding. With [this bill], California will be able to make the most of these possibilities by updating and strengthening the state definition of FRCs.”

Arguments in Opposition: None on file.

RELATED AND PRIOR LEGISLATION:

SB 436 (Hurtado) Chapter 476, Statutes of 2019, see comments above.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Family Resource Association (Co-Sponsor)
 Child Abuse Prevention Center and its Affiliates Safe Kids California, Prevent Child Abuse California and the California Family Resource Association (Co-Sponsor)
 African American Family & Cultural Center
 All for Kids
 Aspiranet
 California Alliance of Child and Family Services
 Carpinteria Children's Project

Center for Family Strengthening
Centro LA Familia Advocacy Services
Child Abuse Prevention Coordinating Council of Humboldt County
Child Abuse Prevention Council of Contra Costa County
Child Care Resource Center
Community Bridges
Comprehensive Youth Services of Fresno, INC
County of Los Angeles
Dixon Family Services
East Bay Agency for Children
East County First 5 Center
Exceptional Parents Unlimited
Exhilaration Station Family Resource Center
Family Resource Center Network of Solano County
Family Resource Centers Network of California
Family Voices of California
First 5 Contra Costa
First 5 Sacramento
Folsom Cordova Community Partnership
Fresno Council on Child Abuse Prevention
GLIDE Foundation
Helpline Youth Counseling, INC.
Lincoln Families
Lotus Bloom Family Resource Center
Mariposa Family Resource Center
Merced County Office of Education Family Resource Center
On the Move
Parenting Network INC.
River Oak Center for Children
Safe & Sound
Safe Passages
SANE-SART
SHIELDS for Families
Sierra Community House
Solano Family & Children's Services
Sutter County Children & Families Commission
Sycamores
United Parents
United Way of Stanislaus County
West Fresno Health Care Coalition

Opposition

None on file.

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