Orange County, CA
In-Depth Technical Assistance
Site Update Brief: **July 2023**

Valuing the role of **FAMILY**
Working to keep families **TOGETHER**
Supporting a parent's **RECOVERY**

Project Focus

The **County of Orange Social Services Agency** and **First 5 Orange County** were awarded the In-Depth Technical Assistance (IDTA) program in May 2023. Through the IDTA program, Orange County is working with the National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare (NCSACW) to develop a comprehensive framework for Plans of Safe Care (POSC) that will:

- Improve outcomes for infants and families affected by prenatal substance exposure.
- Support the recovery of pregnant and parenting individuals and their families.
- Develop policies and protocols that support intervention during the prenatal period.
- Reduce the number of infant removals due to parental substance use.

Project Goals

- Reduce stigma and discrimination by identifying and implementing methods to establish trust between the community, child welfare, service delivery providers, and the judicial system.

- Increase the coordination of care and the implementation of Plans of Safe Care by developing and implementing protocols between partners that formalize how partner agencies will interact with, serve, and improve outcomes for families impacted by parental substance use and infants effected by prenatal exposure to substances.

- Improve data collection and exchange with a racial/ethnic equity lens.

- Increase access to care and services by cultivating a family-centered focus of treatment and support.

Cross-Systems Partnerships

The intent is to establish a **cross-system multi-tiered governance structure** with a county oversight committee, a core team and goal-specific workgroups, comprised of county and community representatives. It is critical to have cross-system linkages between healthcare providers, community-based organizations, public health agencies, behavioral health providers and substance abuse treatment facilities.

Current Partners include:

- CalOptima Health
- Children's Hospital of Orange County
- Family Support Network
- First 5 Orange County
- Hoag Hospital
- Hospital Association of Southern California
- Office of the Public Defender
- Orange County Health Care Agency
- Orange County Superior Court
- Orange County Social Services Agency
- People with Lived Expertise
- Providence St. Joseph Hospital, Orange

Initial Activities
How Orange County is setting itself up to accomplish its goal of improving outcomes for families

To achieve the goals, the Orange County team identified four key activities to focus its initial efforts. These four activities will lay the groundwork to develop a countywide POSC framework. They are designed to improve outcomes for families affected by parental substance use, pregnant individuals with substance use disorders, and infants born prenatally exposed to substances.

Key Activities

System Walkthroughs

Two system walkthroughs were conducted to better understand current practices regarding how systems 1) identify, 2) refer, and 3) engage families, pregnant women and their infants who are affected by substance use.

The insight gained during these and future walkthroughs will assist in designing a countywide POSC framework

Initiative Alignment

Orange County has a multitude of partners who are passionate about improving outcomes for families affected by substance use.

This initiative brings together these partners to map and align existing initiatives and create a structure for ongoing collaboration.

Workgroup Launch

Orange County will launch four workgroups tasked with producing deliverables for each IDTA goal. Workgroups will center around:

1. Stigma and discrimination
2. POSC coordination
3. Data collection
4. Improved access to family-centered care

The intent is to partner with any existing workgroups with the same focus to avoid redundancies.

IDTA Summit

To raise awareness and public support, the Orange County team will host a summit event to:

- Gain buy-in from cross-systems stakeholders at multiple levels of influence.
- Generate momentum to achieve the IDTA goals.
- Establish milestones to achieve during the entire IDTA journey.