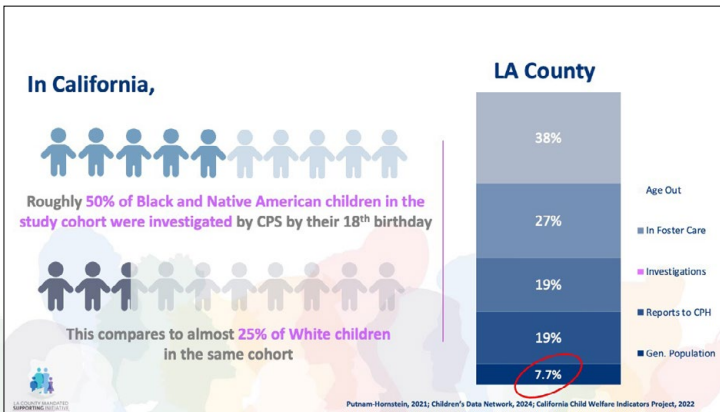
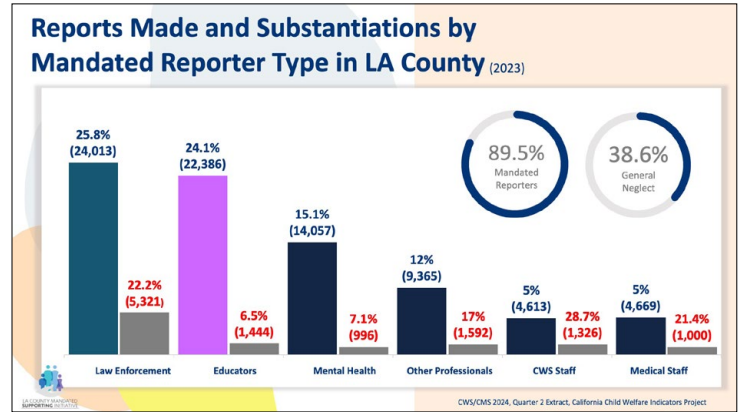


Overview: Mandated Reporting Reform in Los Angeles County Schools

The Case for Mandated Reporting Reform:

- Mandated reporting law is about keeping children safe, and it is essential that mandated reporters are trained and supported to recognize and report reasonable suspicion of child abuse and/or neglect.
- A significant proportion (over 1/3) of reports to Los Angeles County's Child Protection Hotline allege general neglect (38.6%), a broad and ambiguous category that is often conflated with poverty related concerns.
- In 2023, mandated reporters in education were responsible for about 1 out of every 4 reports of suspected abuse or neglect (24.1%) received by Los Angeles County's Child Protection Hotline.
- Only 6.5% of the reports made by educators (fewer than 1 in 10) were substantiated following an investigation (*the lowest substantiation rate of any mandated reporter group*).
 - Overreporting, and inaccurate reporting have significant consequences, including driving racial disproportionality in the child welfare system and reduced trust between families and our schools.



A recent study found that roughly half of Black and Native American children in California were investigated by CPS by their 18th birthday.

In Los Angeles County, Black children make up 7.7% of the population, but 19% of reports to the child protection hotline, 19% of investigations, 27% of the children in foster care, and 38% of the youth in foster care who age out of the system.

Further insights from the field, including surveys, focus groups, and [listening sessions](#) demonstrate the need and desire for improved training and decision support tools for mandated reporters.

- 17% of educators in a recent survey indicated that they made a report without concerns about potential child abuse or neglect, with 66% of those respondents citing wanting to protect themselves or their organization from liability

Systems Transformation: How We Get There

Stakeholders locally, statewide and across the nation have recognized that the current model of mandated reporting is deeply flawed, and are paving a better path forward.

California's Assembly Bill 2085 (AB 2085): In 2023, California took a critical step in these reform efforts with implementation of Assembly Bill (AB) 2085, which narrowed the legal definition of general neglect and codified the important distinction between neglect and poverty-related challenges. Understanding these changes is crucial for educators in **our** role as mandated reporters.

The law aims to:

- eliminate overreporting due to bias based on race and class
- rectify conflation of poverty with general neglect
- decrease the strain on the child welfare system



Is not only the law, but presents tremendous opportunity to further whole family approaches in education!

Los Angeles County's Mandated Supporting Initiative (MSI): In May 2023, the L.A. County Board of Supervisors passed the "[Moving from Mandated Reporting to Mandated Supporting](#)" motion, directing reform.

A broad coalition of partners, including the Los Angeles County Office of Education and local education agencies (LEA), is working countywide to transform to a model which:

- **prevents** child harm and **promotes** family well-being
- **provides** high-quality **supportive services to families** in need to **prevent** maltreatment
- **eliminates** mandatory reporting as a driver of **racial disproportionality**

The Los Angeles County Office of Education is working with key partners to transform the mandated reporting process in education across Los Angeles County to better support historically underserved children, youth and families. New and improved training and decision support tools have been developed in collaboration with Los Angeles County to help mandated reporters make more accurate and equitable reporting and **supporting** decisions when determining whether a situation constitutes a 'reasonable suspicion' of reportable general neglect.

Summary and Next Steps

- The current system of mandated reporting is flawed and often harmful.
- Assembly Bill 2085 aims to reduce overreporting and address racial disproportionality. Effective implementation of this law requires collaboration and support at all levels.
- Tools and resources to help districts and charters navigate these changes, including [training materials](#) and a [family resource finder tool](#), are available at [SupportingFamilies.lacounty.gov](#)
- It is highly recommended that all mandated reporters in education, including all district and charter staff complete [Los Angeles County's on-line AB 2085 training](#)
- Educational leaders are encouraged to convene a working group to complete the [district readiness checklist](#) and develop an organization-wide training and support rollout plan
- Attend [LACOE office hours](#) for consultation and support

To access training, information, and other resources, visit:

[SupportingFamilies.lacounty.gov](#)
[lacoedu/mandatedsupporting](#)

