



STRENGTHENING OUR NETWORKS: Key Takeaways from Stakeholders



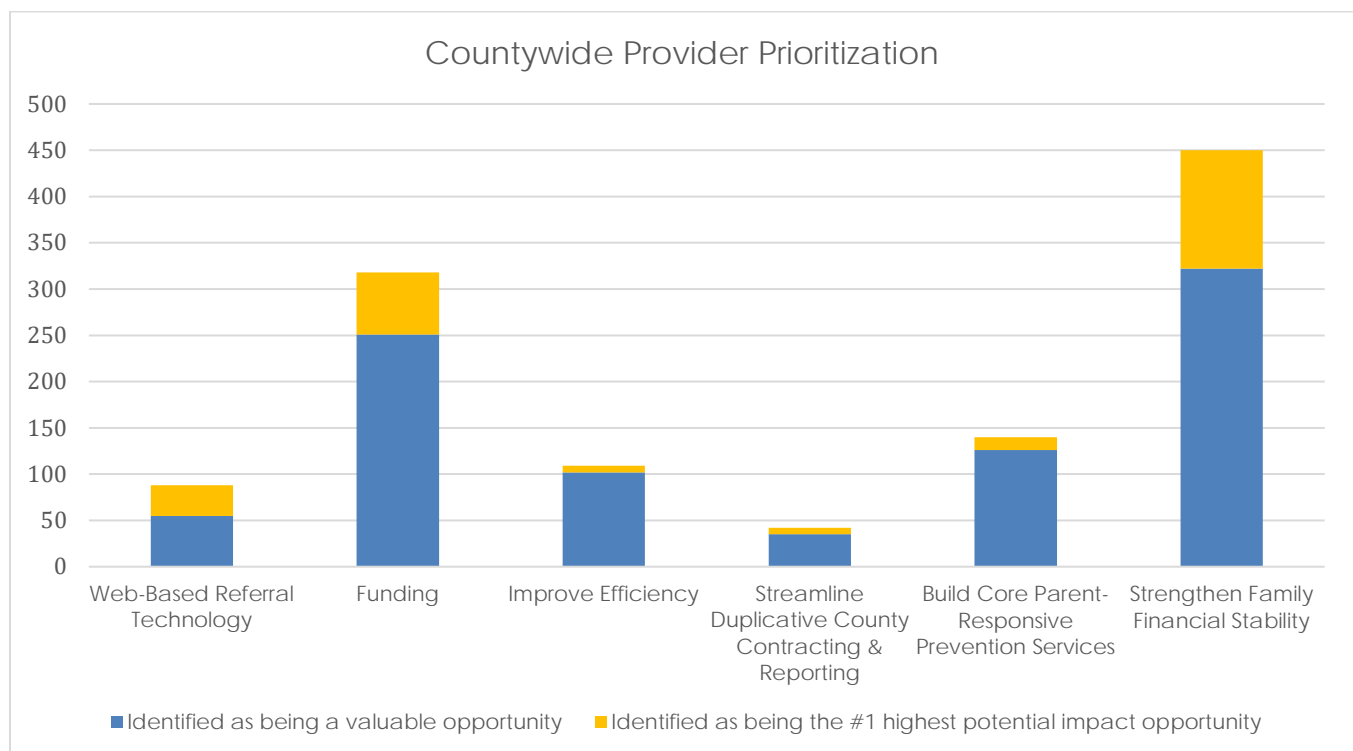
Executive Summary

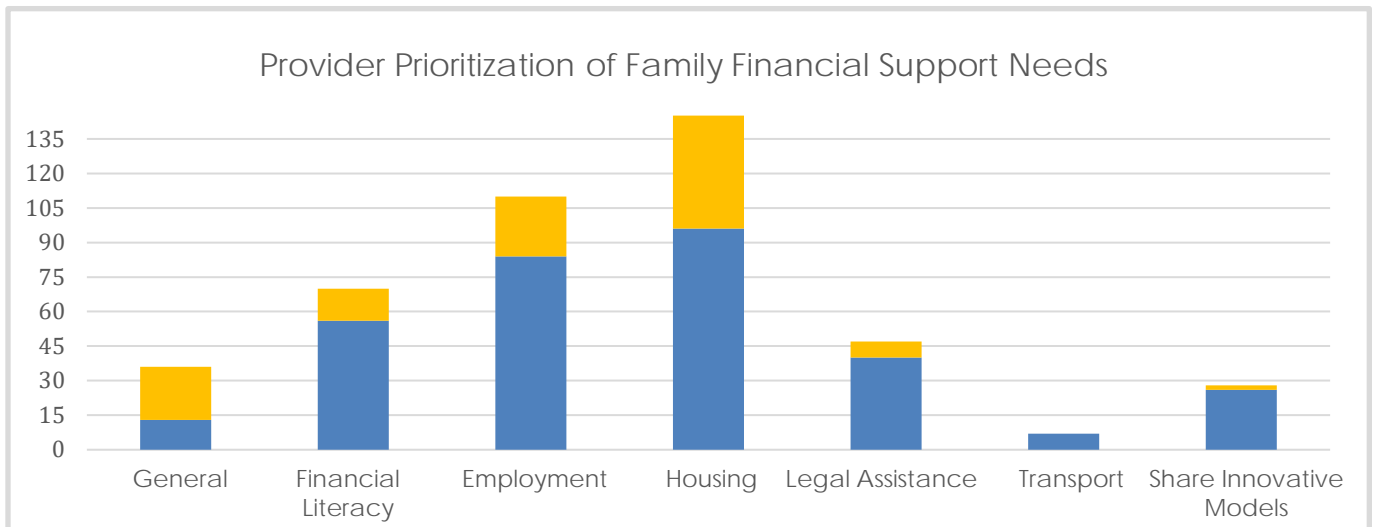
During March through May of 2019, the LA County Office of Child Protection (OCP) and First 5 LA hosted a series of input sessions in collaboration with prevention network organizers in each of the Service Planning Areas (SPAs) of Los Angeles County (including representatives from Native American and Asian/Pacific Islander service networks). The partners also hosted an input session with parent leaders from across the County in collaboration with SBCC Thrive LA.

Participants were asked to reflect on a set of six draft recommendations proposed by the Office of Child Protection's "Networking the Networks" workgroup. Each draft recommendation was intended to progress the first of seven prevention strategies identified in the County-wide Prevention Plan: "Map out and then weave together existing prevention networks." Participants were invited to vote on those recommendations that would be most valuable in helping to strengthen families in their community, as well as to give open-ended feedback on each concept.

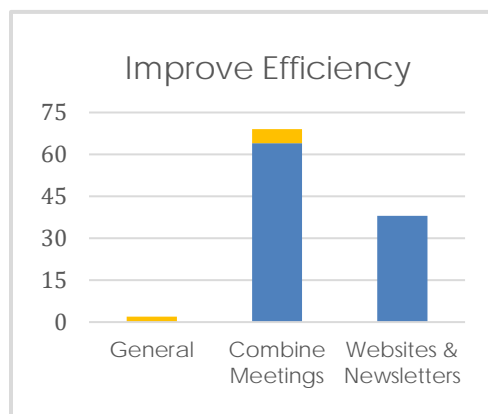
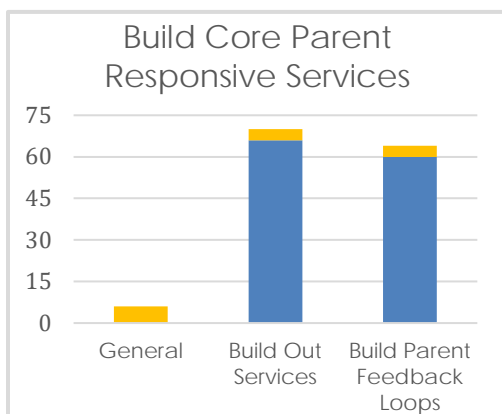
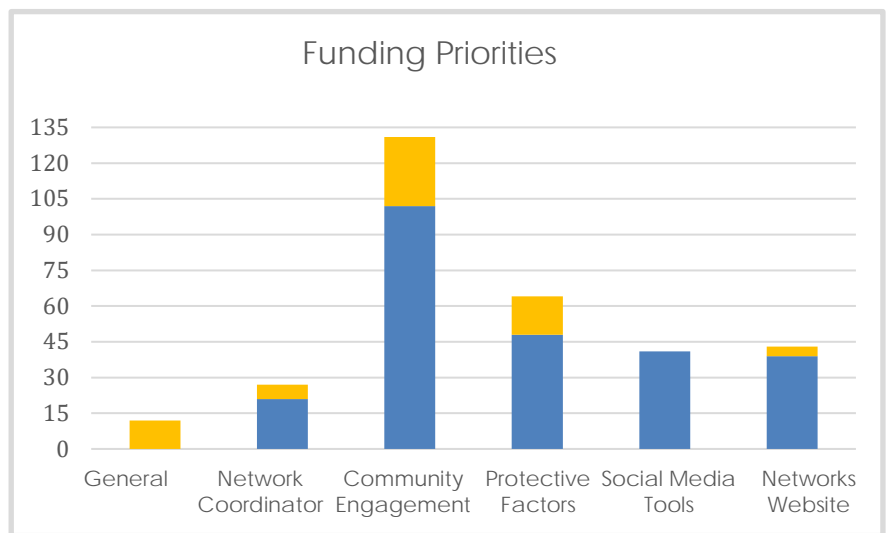
Service Provider Prioritization of Proposed Concepts

As illustrated in the charts below, service providers throughout Los Angeles County identified "Strengthening family financial stability" as the most valuable recommendation for improving prevention in their community. Employment and housing were most frequently cited as priorities, but all financial resources listed had support among stakeholders. Stakeholders also added child care, adult mental health, health care and transportation as areas of need, and emphasized the importance of integrated approaches.





The second area identified consistently as a high priority among stakeholders was increased funding—specifically funding for greater community engagement, as well as funding for more protective factors work and funding in general. Stakeholder interest in community engagement and protective factors was also reflected by parallel interest in social media, parent feedback loops, and service offering build-out. Web-based referral technology also had consistent support.



A modest number of stakeholders in several geographies (SPAs 1, 2, 3, 4, 8 & 9) agreed that combining meetings is also a worthwhile pursuit, but that interest was not consistent across all geographies.

Regional Variations

Stakeholder priorities were *remarkably consistent across geographies and communities*, with financial supports, funding and community engagement emphasized in every focus group. The following opportunities were emphasized by specific communities: SPA 1 – reentry support; SPA 8 – fatherhood support; SPA 10 – addressing the ICWA mandate and increasing County partnerships with native community orgs to better honor & support indigenous land/people.

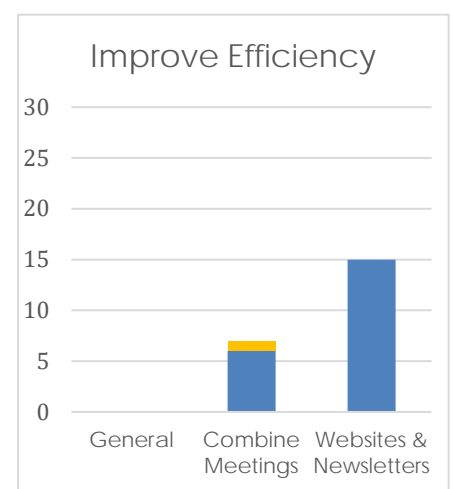
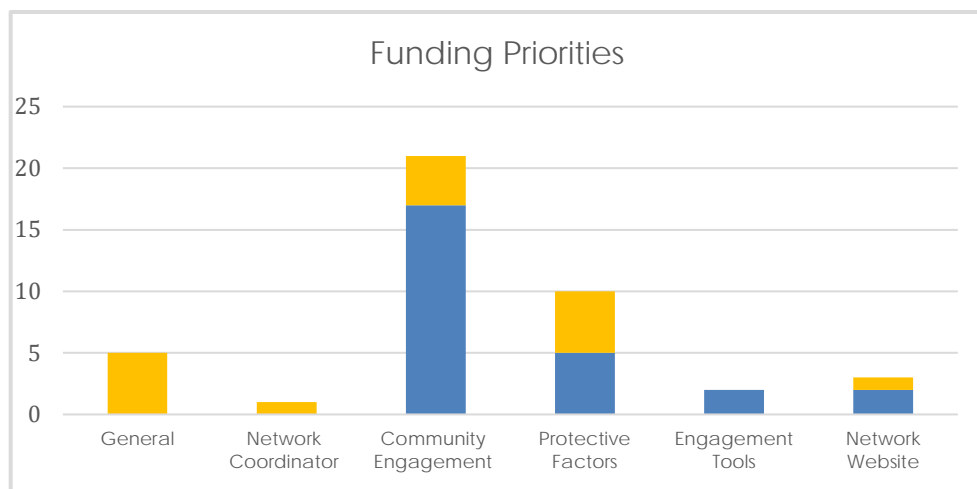
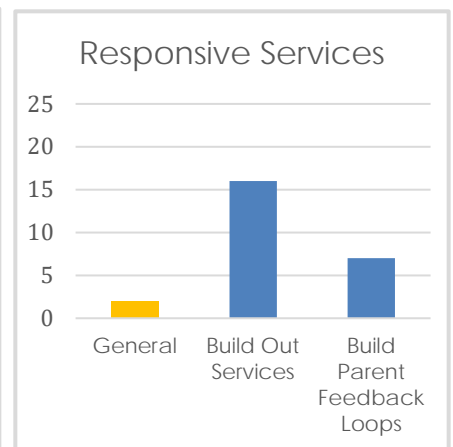
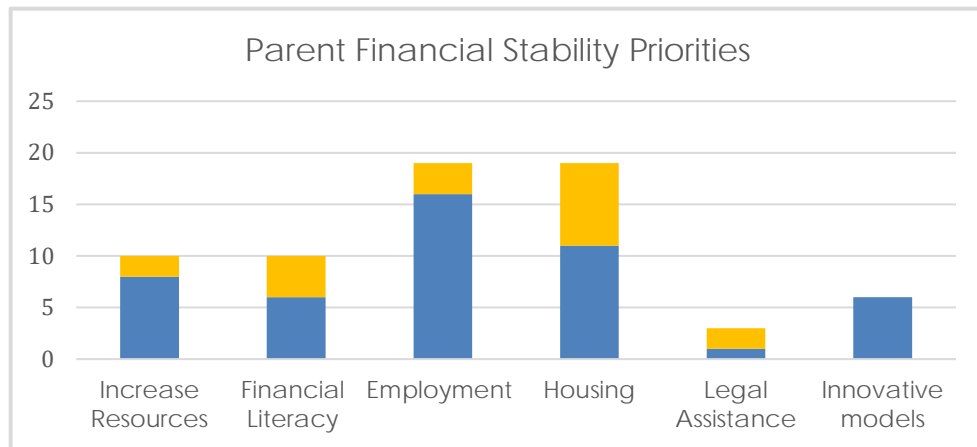
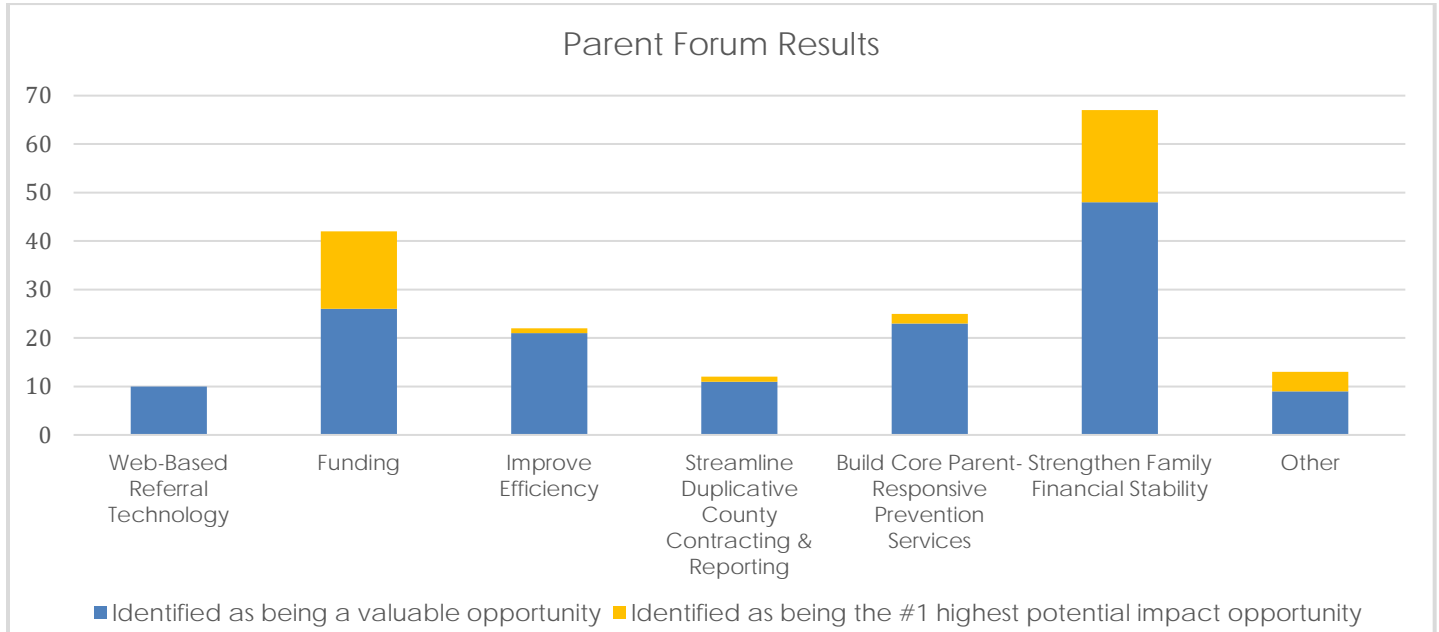
Narrative Input from Providers

Key takeaways from participant written comments regarding each topic are displayed in the table below.

Key Takeaways from Provider Written Input	
Referral Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any effective system must be updated regularly and include real-time availability, filtering capability, and formal quality control/assurance mechanisms. • An electronic referral system should allow for outcome tracking and communication between referring entities and resource providers. • Various resource and referral tools already exist, though some systems are more successful than others. • Accessibility and ease of use for both providers and families are very important; accessibility concerns include access to platforms (phone, app, website, etc.), languages, and training.
Increasing Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition to funding for community engagement, training on best practices and culturally appropriate community and family engagement techniques should be provided for staff and used to design outreach plans. • Research should be conducted to ensure that the social media platforms chosen for engagement are actively used in and would reach the intended communities. • There is strong support for funding to support protective factors. • There is support for funding to improve communication between networks, but lack of consensus on how to do so.
Improving Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is support for combining network meetings, but lack of consensus on how to do so.
Streamlining Contractual Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is support for streamlining funding requirements and submission processes, though it was not generally one of the higher priorities identified.
Building Core Responsive Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before prevention programs for parents are created, community/parent input sessions should be hosted to ensure that services are responsive to parents' needs. • A variety of parent services were suggested, including resources for fathers, teens, and adult mental health.
Strengthening Family Financial Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the proposed categories – financial literacy, employment, housing, and legal assistance – were identified as areas of importance, with numerous suggestions that these services should operate in a coordinated and complementary way. • Employment & housing should be prioritized. • High levels of need were identified for people involved in the criminal justice system and undocumented families. • In addition to programs for parents, there was a need identified for programs that help set children up for educational and financial success. • Advocacy to address root economic challenges and/or to integrate parent input into planning may be beneficial. • Additional areas of need were identified: health care, adult mental health, childcare, and transportation.

Parent Prioritization of Proposed Concepts

Parent input echoed provider perspectives. Financial stability supports were identified as the highest priority for helping to strengthen families and communities, with particular emphasis on housing and employment. Funding was identified as the second highest priority, with an emphasis on funding community engagement and protective factors respectively.



Through their written input, parents shared the importance of accessibility—both for technology and services. They expressed interest in parenting, mental health, and financial stability resources. They also expressed interest in learning how to identify and respond to abuse. Key takeaways from parents’ written input are listed below.

Key Takeaways from Parent Narrative Input	
Referral Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic and text-based referral resources are desired • Ease of use, language and accessibility is important • Training is needed for parents and staff
Community Engagement, Protective Factors & Service Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent leaders are interested in growing more groups, information, and partnership within communities • Accessible materials and trained outreach staff are needed • Services need to be accessible and timely • Parenting information and classes are specifically desired • Parents also emphasized the need for safe spaces for children to play & learn • Mental health resources are also needed • Parent leaders are also interested in community involvement and partnership
Family Financial Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing affordability is the most frequently voiced concern • Employment, financial literacy & other resources are also desired
Additional Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent leaders desired information regarding how to identify and respond to abuse