COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

Child Abuse Prevention Council October 1, 2026 Meeting Minutes

SAN MATEO COUNTY
Child Abuse Prevention Council

Meeting Date: Thursday, October 1, 2026
Meeting Time: 1:30 pm
Location: Hybrid: HSA COB3/MS Teams
Next Meeting Date: Thursday, November 5, 2026

Present: Meron Asfaw (CFS CAPC Committee Coord), John Fong (Director CFS), Elizabeth Cauley (Stanford SCAN Team); Elisa Kuhl (Deputy Director RTS), Eric Valladares (Exec. Director Family Connections), Melissa Guariglia (Deputy Director Family Connections), Geeta Devjani (BHRS), Veronica Landa (Director Family Health Services), Bethany Fair (Legislative Aide BOS Jackie Spiere), Jennifer Clark (First 5 San Mateo County), Rosa Diaz (CFS)

Agenda Items	Discussion
Welcome & Public Comment	No public comment
CFS Updates	**2026 Child Abuse Prevention Summit** A gentle reminder of the upcoming summit which will occur on Weds., Oct. 14, 2026 and Thurs., Oct. 15, 2026. Committee members who are interested in attending can contact Meron. Registration will be closing soon. **New Worker Training (NWTU) Unit** The NWTU consists of 13 new hires who are in the midst of training and who are scheduled to be deployed by the end of this year. **San Mateo County Children & Family Services (CFS) Data Reports - Requests** CFS Director John Fong has welcomed requests from committee members interested in reporting on child welfare data collected by CFS. Committee members can submit their requests directly to Mr. Fong. **CPS Referral Submissions**

	CFS is entering its peak season for suspected child abuse referrals. The peak months for the agency are from September to October; both Hotline and Investigations Units are impacted.
CAPC Members Announcements	**Rape Trauma Services (RTS)** RTS Deputy Director of Crisis Intervention Elisa Kuhl announced the successful launch of 2 girl's empowerment groups in Menlo Atherton and in San Mateo. RTS is planning for the start of a 3rd girls empowerment group in Redwood City. RTS has recently hired 2 prevention educators. **2026 Standford Child Abuse Conference** A gentle reminder was given to committee members of the November 2026 Standford Child Abuse Conference. More information will be provided during today's CAPC Committee member Elizabeth Cauley's presentation.
Reporting & Discussion Agenda 2027 CAPC Month Planning	**2027 Child Abuse Prevention (CAP) Month Planning** The planning phase should begin at least 4 to 5 months in advance. Historically CAP Month has included: • Proclamation presented by San Mateo County Board of Supervisors • Flag raising commemorating the children who lost their lives to abuse and neglect • Distribution of blue-ribbon pins to the community This past year a public awareness campaign was carried out around car-seat safety Suggestions from committee members for 2027 CAPC Month activities were requested for new activities to add to next year's agenda. Continuing with the routine events was also presented as an option. Suggestion no.#1 As a result of an observation made at the April 2026 flag raising event, a resource table, further promoting public awareness was suggested. Passers-by were asking questions about the significance of the flag raising event. Suggestion no.#2 (Eric Valladares, Family Connections) The flag raising event has typically occurred from 9:00 AM – 9:30 AM. Following the flag raising, a continental type of breakfast could be served, acting as a transition from one event to a presentation from volunteer committee member organizations on current initiatives. Presentations would also include a brief 10 min. – 15 min. San Mateo County CAPC presentation. The audience is key to deciding what activities, events, and presentations are planned to ensure they are making an impact. Historically, the audience consisted primarily of County staff and partners. Expanding the event would require a degree of communication and marketing to reach a wider audience.

	Because the flag raising tends to be a somber event, it is worth separating the commemorative event from the informational sessions, (i.e. CAPC Committee presentation, resource table). To address this, a suggestion is to schedule a break between the 2 events and move the CAPC Committee activities to another location to assist with transitioning the mood. Outreach efforts are necessary to identify other populations (i.e. community) to invite to the event. If the public is going to be in the audience, the committee must be prepared to answer questions as there are misconceptions about the work done by child protective services. A question was asked about what other counties do to honor Child Abuse Prevention Month, and if any are known to sponsor standalone events? Meron shared that other counties do sponsor training sessions and workshops that the public is invited to. San Francisco County, Monterey County, and Santa Clara County CAPCs are at an advanced stage in comparison. The desire is for San Mateo County CAPC to mimic these counties, but it would require an additional resources and staffing. Planning would need to begin immediately. Suggestion no. #3 Stanford distributed pinwheels with child abuse prevention sayings to the public in their S.F offices. This idea could be replicated by the committee. Suggestion no. #4 San Mateo County Mental Health had ribbons throughout the Redwood City County Center for Mental Health Awareness Month, which could also be replicated for CAPC Month. Suggestion no. #5 Each year the Greater Bay Area CAPC determines a theme as a focal point for the coming year's activities. The theme can be developed in the months leading up to CAPC Month. The pinnacle would be to have an organization present on the focal point being campaigned. The theme chosen by the Greater Bay Area will be finalized by November 2026. Suggestion no. #6 A presentation from someone with a lived experience with child abuse would strengthen outreach efforts to communicate that prevention is a community effort. Meron is also working on finalizing the San Mateo County CAPC Strategic plan CAPC's Outreach Committee is working on structuring the focus for each month which could include CAPC Month planning.

	The next step is to engage San Mateo County Board of Supervisor Jackie Spierer to understand the structure CAPC will be working within.
CAPC Program Spotlight	Presentation by Stanford Elizabeth Cauley Standford's SCAN (Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect) Team Physicians: Dr. Melissa Egge, Dr. Steward, and Dr. Elizabeth Cauley • Recognition response management of suspected abuse or neglect cases • 24/7 consultation • Same day response • Consultations for suspected child abuse cases • Education on child abuse topics, (head trauma, sex abuse, screenings, skin findings, medically fragile) • Mandated reported training • Two screenings for pediatric patients (any child presenting with an injury). The screenings will assess the type of injury and determine if it is associated with abuse. SCAN Resource Allocation These are philanthropic funds used to support families with basic needs, (i.e. car seats, gift cards). Funds are distributed to families whose financial circumstances could correlate to neglect. An example is an infant who sustained a head injury after falling off the bed. After further investigation, it was realized that the infant did not have its own bed. The family lacked the funds to purchase a crib. In-N-Out also engages in fundraising to support efforts preventing human trafficking and child abuse and neglect. Their to-go bags have the hotline number to report human trafficking. Stanford CAPC Month Activities • The initiatives are focused on prevention of child abuse as well as back-to-school readiness. • Blue Pinwheels Distribution Pinwheels were interpreted to represent a happy and healthy child and convey the message that every child deserves to be free of abuse and neglect. • Webinars provided by the Greater BAY Area CAPC are communicated to staff and participation is encouraged. • Mandated Reporter training 2026 Stanford Child Abuse Conference This will be a virtual event held on November 6, 2026. The Keynote speaker will be Ms. Elizabeth Smart, a survivor,

	who is one of 8 speakers in total. It will be an information dense day, including presentations on high level medical topics balanced by non-medical presentations. Group rates are available for 5+ attendees. Early bird pricing is still available. Increased Partnership for San Mateo County CAPC Stanford Continuing Education Staff assist with planning this yearly conference. There may be a potential partnership opportunity for San Mateo County CAPC to have a spot on the agenda. Dr. Egge works with the Keller Center, another potential collaboration for San Mateo County CAPC to partner in an event. Meron confirmed that the committee could offer support with outreach for potential training sessions.
CAPC Month Campaign Topic Selection	The September 2026 CAPC Meeting, potential topics were discussed with committee members Four potential topics arose from surveys and conversations occurring over the past 3 months The 4 topics are: • Sex Abuse Prevention (*a strong candidate) • Domestic Violence (there is already a lot of outreach across San Mateo County) • Protective Factors - parental resilience and social connections, concrete support • Substance Use Prevention 2 Hypothesis Ideas Option A: Substance Use Education and Harm Reduction + Fatherhood Engagement Focus: educating families on the impact of substance abuse in the home, safety storage, and protective factors to prevent child neglect. Fatherhood Lens: engage fathers in substance use awareness, positive coping strategies, and their connection with family support Alignment with San Mateo County CAPC: promote protective activities and active parental presence Option B: Child Sexual Abuse Prevention and Body Safety + Fatherhood Engagement Focus: empower parents with body safety education, boundary setting, and safe touch guidelines for children. Fatherhood Lens: equip fathers with the tools and language to talk openly with their child about safety, Boundaries, and protection. Alignment with San Mateo County CAPC: fill a critical community education gap with active involvement as proactive protectors and advocates When choosing which topic to pursue, Committee members were asked to take the following questions into consideration:

	1.) Which option allows the CAPC Committee to deliver the most practical, actionable, public awareness message within the current capacity? 2.) Which topic will engage the audience the most? 3.) How are fathers engaged in the conversations addressing the issues and concerns? If fathers are the target, the audience would narrow but the discussion would widen if the focus shifted to a father's role and impact. Selecting a particular and specific population, like fathers, would narrow the focus group for outreach efforts. Every year the standing question is the focus area/campaign and the targeted population/audience. Committee members were asked to cast their vote, but some members expressed their inability to cast a vote until additional information is obtained on preventive efforts and the target audience. Today's goal was to pick one option, but committee members agreed that further conversation was needed with the focal points of discussion being a.) what is leading the topic or b.) the target population to drive the campaign. Regardless of the final decision of the focal topic, the role or involvement of a father should remain in constant consideration.
Adjournment	**Next Meeting:** Thursday, November 5, 2026 **Time:** 1:30 - 2:30pm **Location:** Virtual