



CALIFORNIA'S SDM[®] CORE TEAM: OVERVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Structured Decision Making[®] (SDM) system is a suite of research and evidence-based assessment tools used to help guide decision making at key points in the child welfare system. Implementing these tools effectively and equitably requires bringing a diverse group of voices to the table. California's SDM Core Team serves as a statewide steering committee tasked with supporting the high-fidelity integration of the SDM system into child welfare practice across the state.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Core Team is to build partnership between the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), California counties, and key child welfare stakeholders to support the rigorous use of the SDM system in order to achieve consistent and equitable child welfare decision making.

MEMBERSHIP

California's Core Team is composed of representatives who lead and support child welfare decision making and SDM implementation within each of the 58 counties. Representation should span across regions, leadership levels, and areas of child welfare practice; and it should involve key child welfare stakeholders, including tribal representatives and training partners.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Core Team is responsible for helping to review and monitor data trends related to SDM use and decision making across the state; troubleshoot local and statewide concerns with policy, practice, or implementation; and guide ongoing work to strengthen system integration. In addition, Core Team members are tasked with leading ongoing communication and dissemination of information between the statewide steering team and county leadership.

The Core Team serves as the primary group for vetting new SDM policy and practice initiatives at a statewide level and works with CDSS and Evident Change staff to bring critical voices and perspectives from their local systems and communities to statewide decisions about the SDM system.

Key activities related to the Core Team include the following.

- **Annual Statewide Core Team Meeting:** The annual Core Team meeting provides an opportunity for county leadership and key stakeholders to come together with their peers across the state to review statewide and county-level data trends in SDM use and child welfare decision making and use those data to guide ongoing priorities for the upcoming year.
- **Quarterly SDM Webinars:** Quarterly webinars bring together Core Team members and other child welfare staff to discuss a targeted topic related to SDM implementation. These meetings provide a platform for cross-county learning and collaboration related to the SDM system. While Core Team members are not required to participate in webinars, they are encouraged to lead dissemination of information for quarterly meetings for relevant local leadership.
- **User Feedback and Continuous Evaluation:** The SDM system is a suite of research-based tools that are updated periodically to incorporate changes in federal and state statutes and regulation, new research, evaluation, and county feedback. The California Core Team plays a critical role in supporting implementation, evaluation, and updates of SDM assessments statewide. Core Team members may also lead strategies within their local jurisdiction to support high-fidelity implementation and monitoring of associated outcomes.
- **Information Dissemination:** Core Team members lead ongoing dissemination of new information, training, and resources related to supporting ongoing SDM implementation.

For more information or questions regarding participation in California's SDM Core Team, please contact Claire Crowley at ccrowley@evidentchange.org