

Legacy Forward

2025 STRATEGIC PLAN



**BLACK CHILD
LEGACY**
CAMPAIGN

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Sacramento County Board of Supervisors:

The Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths in Sacramento County proudly presents the **Legacy Forward: 2025 Strategic Plan**.

This document builds upon the foundation laid by our 2015 plan, which launched the Black Child Legacy Campaign as a groundbreaking public agency and community partnership committed to ensuring that African American children and their families, like all children and families in Sacramento County, have the resources to stay connected and healthy.

This commitment was driven by findings from a 20-year review conducted by the Sacramento County Child Death Review Team, which revealed a stark reality: for two decades, African American children in Sacramento County died at twice the rate of all other children. This data sounded an urgent call for accountability and action to address this alarming disparity. Ultimately, the community's love for Black families sparked a bold movement and transformative infrastructure that normalized collaborative partnerships between communities, nonprofit organizations, philanthropy and county and city agencies. Together, as the Black Child Legacy Campaign, these partners deliver wrap-around services to reduce African American child deaths.

↓ **54%**
REDUCTION
in infant sleep
deaths as of 2020

↓ **27%**
REDUCTION
in overall deaths
as of 2020

Since 2015, Sacramento County has achieved notable success guided by RAACD's strategies focused on advocacy and policy, investment and systematic impact, coordinated systems of support, data-driven accountability and collective impact, and communications and information systems. These efforts give our county much to be proud of. Since the implementation of Black Child Legacy Campaign, infant sleep-related deaths have declined by **more than 54 percent**, as of 2020. The initial goal of a 10 percent to 20 percent reduction of the overall African American death rate was surpassed—achieving a **27 percent reduction** countywide.

This success can be attributed, in large part, to Black Child Legacy Campaign's comprehensive support system of trusted Community Incubator Leads (CILs) in the seven Sacramento neighborhoods with the highest disproportionate rates of African American child deaths. Co-located in each of the CILs are cultural brokers, crisis intervention workers and multidisciplinary teams, including County agency staff. These teams provide intensive

case management for African American families, playing a pivotal role in the campaign's success. These achievements demonstrate the power of collaboration and affirm a critical truth: meaningful change is possible—and can only occur in partnership with Black families themselves.

Yet, while we celebrate these successes, we recognize that reduction is only the beginning. Our ultimate goal is eliminating the disparity between the rate of African American child deaths and the rates of all other children in Sacramento County.

The Living Legacy: 2025 Strategic Plan calls for deeper investment to drive systemic change, close racial disparity gaps in the Campaign's four focus areas (perinatal conditions, infant sleep-related deaths, child abuse and neglect, and third-party homicide), and sustain our promising and proven strategies. It also prioritizes sustaining Black Child Legacy Campaign's CILs and expanding support to meet the emerging needs of Black families in Sacramento County. It guides our growth over the next five years through a data-informed expansion from seven to eight focused neighborhoods, reaffirming our commitment to the health, safety and joy of Black children, youth and families—and ultimately, all children in Sacramento County.

On behalf of the Steering Committee, we extend our gratitude to the community we are in service with, the many collaborative partners who make this work possible and the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, whose leadership and investment helped seed an ambitious but necessary change—a change that has become *living legacy*.

We look forward to advancing the efforts of the Black Child Legacy Campaign by working with the Board of Supervisors as we implement our **Living Legacy 2025 Strategic Plan**.

ONWARD AND UPWARD,



Chet P. Hewitt

Chair

RAACD Steering Committee



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Seeding Legacy: Our Story

In 2013, seeds of a lasting legacy were planted—sparking a movement that has fundamentally transformed systems, narratives, and neighborhoods in Sacramento County. This transformation began with a unifying call to action to address the disproportionate rate of preventable African American child deaths.

The historical context is critical. In 2011, the **Blue Ribbon Commission on Disproportionate African American Child Deaths**, convened by Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna, conducted an in-depth analysis of more than 20 years of data from the Sacramento County Child Death Review Team. The findings were stark: African American children in Sacramento County died at **twice the rate** of children from other ethnicities—underscoring an urgent need for change.

Leading the call for change was a 25-member community-driven **Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths (RAACD)**, established by a 2013 Sacramento County Board of Supervisors resolution. Convened by The Center at Sierra Health Foundation and funded by Sacramento County and First 5 Sacramento, the Steering Committee was charged with developing a strategic plan to reduce African American child deaths in four focus areas (perinatal conditions, infant sleep-related deaths, child abuse and neglect homicides, and third-party homicide) by 10 to 20 percent by 2020. The result was the **African American Children Matter: What We Must Do Now Strategic Plan** (Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths in Sacramento County, California), released in March 2015.¹ The 2015 plan detailed a systems change model and strategic direction that has given way to significant success, garnered national recognition² and, more importantly, sowed the seeds of legacy across seven neighborhoods in Sacramento County with the highest disproportionate rates of African American child deaths.

This success was not achieved in isolation, but through community-public agency partnerships, which produced, most notably, a **10 percent reduction** in disproportionate preventable African American child deaths within the first year of implementation and a **27 percent reduction** by 2020, a testament to the power of coordinated collective action in the Black Child Legacy Campaign.

Together, through the Black Child Legacy Campaign, we have made a measurable difference, and we should all be proud of what we have achieved. However, now is not

1 African American Children Matter: What We Must Do Now Strategic Plan, (Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths in Sacramento County, California) March 2015. https://blackchildlegacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/RAACD_Strategic_Plan_Report_March_2015.pdf

2 Black Child Legacy Campaign Nationally Recognized, March 7, 2019. <https://www.saccounty.gov/news/latest-news/Pages/Archive/Black-Child-Legacy-Campaign-Nationally-Recognized.aspx>

the time for complacency. Our soil requires tilling. A lasting, sustainable legacy not only will reduce deaths but **eliminate the racial disparity gap** of preventable African American child deaths in Sacramento County. It is with unwavering conviction that the Steering Committee remains committed to the continued bold and unapologetic work of reducing the disproportionate number of African American child deaths through its oversight and implementation support of the Black Child Legacy Campaign.

This **Living Legacy 2025 Strategic Plan** lays out the process informing the development of the plan and priority outcomes necessary to advance the work of the Black Child Legacy Campaign over the next five years.



Strategic Planning: Informing the Process

The strategic planning process unfolded over several years. In summer 2023, the Steering Committee held a working session emphasizing community engagement in shaping the future of Black Child Legacy Campaign (BCLC). Members explored ways to advance progress in the four focus areas and identified new priorities responsive to the evolving needs of Black families in Sacramento County.

The session also examined opportunities to strengthen connections between Steering Committee members and community-level efforts led by Community Incubator Leads (CILs), assessing BCLC's strengths, challenges, and practices. Findings confirmed that while BCLC has driven significant progress, our work is far from done.

A subgroup of the Steering Committee worked closely with Applied Survey Research (ASR) over a series of meetings to analyze county-wide data (2015-2021) across the Campaign's four focus areas. This analysis revealed measurable progress—but also a persistent racial disparity that demands continued action.

Furthermore, the community's voice is not just important—it is essential. Voices of those closest to the work—CILs and families in the seven focus neighborhoods—shaped this plan through integrated feedback loops and a series of Community Town Halls (2024). Unforeseen events, including the 2018 death of Stephon Clark, the COVID-19 pandemic and disproportionate housing challenges for African American families, have further informed a plan rooted in racial equity.

The 2025 Strategic Plan, shaped by the Steering Committee, community input and analysis of eight years of data, holds the potential to bring about transformative change. It communicates priorities necessary for Sacramento County to reflect a more just society and racially equitable distribution of resources across neighborhoods and communities. It builds on the foundational systems change model established in 2015 while magnifying strategic priorities needed to advance impact, close the racial disparity gap in child deaths, and deepen and move the *legacy forward*.

Giving Rise to Saving Black Children: Goals and Strategic Priorities

The four causes of preventable African American child deaths that remain the focus areas of the Black Child Legacy Campaign are:

 Perinatal conditions	 Infant sleep-related deaths
 Child abuse and neglect homicides	 Third-party homicides

Goals aligned with each of the four causes—using 2019-2021 data as a baseline—inform reduction targets and disparity rate reductions, guiding the strategic priorities outlined in the following section.

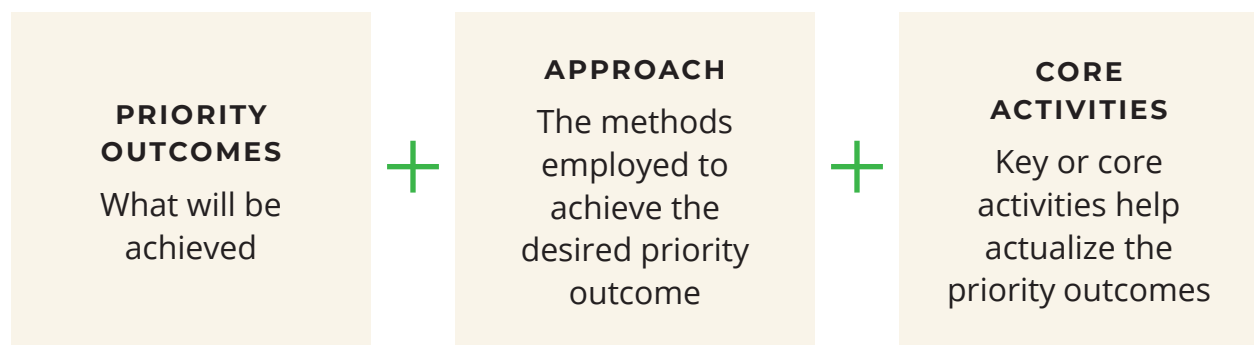
MISSION	Eliminate preventable African American child deaths in Sacramento County.				
FOCUS AREAS	Overall Deaths	Deaths related to Perinatal Conditions	Infant Sleep-Related Deaths	Homicides Related to Child Abuse and Neglect (0-17)	Third-Party Homicides
REDUCTION GOAL (From 2019-2021 rates)	Reduction in number of overall African American child deaths by 10-20%	Reduction in the number of African American child deaths due to perinatal conditions by at least 34%	Reduction in the number of African American child deaths due to infant safe sleep by at least 53%	Reduction in the number of African American Child Abuse and Neglect homicide deaths by at least 66%	Reduction in the number of African American child deaths due to third-party homicides by at least 82%
DISPARITY RATE REDUCTION (From 2019-2021 disparity)	2.34x ↓ 1.39x (-41%)	2.22x ↓ 1.50x (-43%)	4.14x ↓ 2.04x (-51%)	3.23x ↓ 1.0x (-69%)	8.6x ↓ 1.0x (-88%)

The plan’s strategic priorities include the core activities that will drive progress in saving Black children in Sacramento County over the next five years. The Steering Committee has identified **five interdependent strategies** for collective long-term impact to reduce African American child deaths, focused on:

1. **Advocacy and Policy**
2. **Investment and Systematic Impact**
3. **Coordinated Systems of Support**
4. **Data-driven Accountability and Collective Impact**
5. **Communications and Information Systems**

These strategic focus areas have served as a guiding framework for measurable success over the past eight years and now inform the priority outcomes and core activities of the Steering Committee and the Black Child Legacy Campaign. Together, they aim to **eliminate the disproportionate rate of African American child deaths in Sacramento County.**

The following components align with the previously indicated strategies for long-term collective impact:



The subsequent sections detail the **Living Legacy 2025 Strategic Plan.**

Legacy Forward: 2025 Strategic Plan

Reduction of African American Child Deaths

Advocacy and Policy

GOAL STATEMENT

Advance BCLC’s work by equipping community-based experts—including community members, Black children, youth, families and partnering organizations—in eight focused neighborhoods to engage in advocacy that influences local policies addressing the four focus areas, racial health disparities and underlying factors.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 1

Engage community members representing eight Community Incubator Leads (CILs) to advocate for large-scale and small-scale prevention, intervention and policies closing the racial disparity gaps in four focus areas, particularly Third Party Homicide and Perinatal Conditions.

APPROACH 1.1

Identify and convene an inclusive group of community members as represented leaders of the CILs—including executive directors of the CILs—to form a BCLC community advocacy roundtable, advising the Steering Committee on programmatic strategies to achieve intended outcomes.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- a. Identify, convene and meaningfully involve community leaders representing or working collaboratively with the CILs—including CIL executive directors—to support the Steering Committee’s efforts to promote and inform policies related to improving services and investments for African American children, youth and families.
- b. Educate leaders and partners on the role and value of the Black Child Legacy Campaign through various structural gatherings, including annual convenings.
- c. Build connections to other community African American child health movements, housing and workforce development initiatives to further collaboratively address the underlying factors impacting the focus areas.

Investment and Systematic Impact

GOAL STATEMENT

Increase public and private partnerships and investments focused on reducing the racial disparity gap of African American child deaths in BCLC's four focus areas.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 2

Convene at least five new executive-level decision-makers and elected officials in aligning public systems resources toward addressing underlying factors that impact the four BCLC focus areas, prioritizing the areas with the most significant disparities—Third-Party Homicide (Public Safety) and Perinatal Conditions.

APPROACH 2.1

Leverage the Steering Committee to advance cross-agency expansion, interagency communication, and the development of policies that sustain best practices while exploring promising strategies for long-term, sustainable budgetary changes toward reducing the racial disparity gaps of African American child deaths in Sacramento County.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- a. Review and refine the Steering Committee Charter to reflect the expanded scope of work and membership necessary to achieve newly established reduction and disparity goals.
- b. Identify and secure public, private and philanthropic investments to establish an eighth Community Incubator Lead in the City of Rancho Cordova and scale up resources for the seven existing CILs (North Highlands/Foothill Farms, Arden-Arcade, North Sacramento/Del Paso Heights, Oak Park, Fruitridge/Stockton, Meadowview, and Valley Hi).
- c. Integrate inclusive economic structural pathways to ensure that community-based knowledge and technical assistance related to reducing African American child deaths outside of public agency contracted systems is valued, compensated and embedded throughout BCLC's neighborhood-level CIL efforts.
- d. Conduct a landscape budget analysis of programmatic components unique to BCLC's operating infrastructure, costs and procedural practices (Kings & Queens, Healing the Hood, Cultural Brokers, etc.) to determine investment needs for sustaining culturally responsive interventions across eight neighborhoods.
- e. Secure funding for a universal BCLC data management system and enhancements to existing data collection methods for improved multi-system interface, case management and reporting.
- f. Obtain funding to support meaningful, safe, culturally relevant learning enrichment opportunities (e.g., Kings and Queens, Children's Defense Fund Freedom Schools) for African American children, youth and their families during critical summer months when positive engagement options are needed in all eight neighborhoods.

Coordinated Systems of Support

GOAL STATEMENT

Expand BCLC's cross-agency, public-community-based coordinated systems of culturally responsive wraparound intervention and prevention services to eight neighborhoods in Sacramento County.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 3

Strengthen and expand the capacity of partner organizations focused on preventing and reducing the racial disparities of African American child deaths in Sacramento County.

APPROACH 3.1

Expand, develop, and leverage resources to advance efforts to reduce African American child deaths in Sacramento County as aligned with the four focus areas: Perinatal Conditions, Infant-Sleep-related deaths, Child Abuse and Neglect, and Third-Party Homicide.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- a. Expand to an eighth Community Incubator Lead (CIL) in the City of Rancho Cordova to facilitate responsive BCLC coordinated resources support services to reduce the racial disparity of African American child deaths.
- b. Refine BCLC's infrastructure to ensure alignment of cross-sector collaboration and trusted community-level coordination of resource support services across eight neighborhoods.
- c. Restructure BCLC's Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center (virtual) to include an online Community of Practice platform for continuous learning and collaboration among cross-agency partners.
- d. Identify and/or strengthen formalized collaborative partnership agreements with education, housing, workforce and other agencies to address the exacerbated underlying factors impacting the four focus areas and increase access to responsive wraparound services.
- e. Foster the growth and sustainability of BCLC's innovative (e.g., Cultural Brokers, Community Intervention Workers) and intergenerational efforts (e.g., paid internships or youth job employment positions) to build local, intergenerational social mobility opportunities for African American youth and adults.
- f. Enhance and expand integrated procedural systems to continuously support the emotional, mental and overall wellness of BCLC staff, applying a "*healing the healer*" approach for essential workers, including the Healing the Hood Community Violence Intervention Team members, that respond in times of crisis.
- g. Launch a Walk with Mothers pilot program to observe BCLC's coordinated support systems in real time and inform advocacy for policy shifts that improve the quality of public and private services.

- h. Leverage Steering Committee expertise, local community-based organizations and national experts to foster space for continuous capacity-building (e.g., Profound Purpose Institute, GLORY Conference) of BCLC partner organizations, including differentiated engagement by individual needs or roles.



Data-Driven Accountability and Collective Impact

GOAL STATEMENT

Implement consistent, participatory data collection practices across eight neighborhoods, linked to cross-agency partners and driven by racial disparity reduction goals for each of BCLC's four focus areas.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 4

Define interim benchmarks from baseline data (2019-2021), set first mean goal (2026-2029), and establish ultimate long-term measurable impact targets for each focus area to guide BCLC efforts and demonstrate progress.

APPROACH 4.1

Monitor, document and report on progress toward established benchmarks, including assessing the quality of practice, services and implementation of efforts toward reducing the racial disparity of preventable African American child deaths in BCLC's four focus areas.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- a. Develop a universal data management system to capture the full spectrum of multidisciplinary services offered through BCLC, while simultaneously amplifying the reach of impact.
- b. Establish a data workgroup with a focus on utilizing culturally responsive qualitative and quantitative data-gathering practices to tell BCLC's impact story—countywide and neighborhood-specific—with an emphasis on critical issues such as suicide, housing insecurity and behavioral health.
- c. Create and refine evaluation plans with tools for data collection and progress monitoring to measure success across systems and improve the quality and consistency of data collection practices among all eight CILs.
- d. Develop, update and maintain data-sharing agreements with BCLC, public agencies and community partnerships to assess collective impact and opportunity gaps.
- e. Update and use the BCLC Quality Assessment as a continuous improvement tool aligned with long-term strategies, ensuring adherence to high-quality, transformative programs at the neighborhood level.
- f. Share quality assessment results through meetings, presentations, site visits, media and online.

Communications and Information Systems

GOAL STATEMENT

Develop a refreshed BCLC brand identity and communication plan that honors the campaign's foundational elements while highlighting new developments—such as the addition of an eighth Community Incubator Lead (CIL) and the established goals to eliminate racial disparities in African American child deaths.

PRIORITY OUTCOME 5

Launch an enhanced social marketing campaign to increase awareness of the Black Child Legacy Campaign's *living legacy* and purposeful growth, emphasizing efforts to reduce African American child deaths in eight Sacramento County neighborhoods.

APPROACH 5.1

Develop and disseminate community-centered media materials that reflect BCLC's focus areas and neighborhoods, using both traditional and digital platforms to reach diverse audiences.

CORE ACTIVITIES

- a. Design new and update existing materials and communication platforms to reflect 2030 goals and expansion of an eighth Community Incubator Lead.
- b. Develop key advocacy messages rooted in the four focus areas—especially Third-Party Homicides and Perinatal Conditions—and address underlying factors such as food insecurity, housing instability, and limited employment opportunities that contribute to health disparities.
- c. Engage youth and adult community members through CILs as trusted messengers to amplify awareness of BCLC strategies and goals.
- d. Host regular community dialogues and strategic partner sessions (e.g., Unlikely Partner Labs) to strengthen engagement and collaboration within the BCLC network.
- e. Use data insights to shape progress reporting across social media, traditional advertising, public relations, and community outreach initiatives targeting key audiences countywide.
- f. Continue to inform, shape and advance the narrative of BCLC through intentionally designed shared learning spaces, conferences, publications and other related communications projects.
- g. Roll out promotional materials and branded items to increase visibility of BCLC's mission and prevention efforts—especially in the newly added Rancho Cordova community.
- h. Publicly celebrate wins and accomplishments with the community to reinforce momentum and shared ownership of success.

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