The REACH Project

REGISTRY TO END ABUSIVE CAREGIVER HIRING

Protecting people with developmental disabilities through streamlined, accessible abuse reporting

Alarming Statistics

Individuals with developmental disabilities (DD) are...

- 11 times higher risk of being sexually assaulted.³
- 13 times higher risk of being robbed.³
- Higher risk for being re-victimized. Two studies found that 50% of sexually assaulted, DD woman had been victimized 10+ times.³

Background: In California, over 220,000 individuals with developmental disabilities receive care in residential and day programs, independent and supported living, and at-home, private care.¹ Sadly, these individuals are 2 – 5 times more likely to experience severe, long-lasting, and repeated abuse than the non-disabled—in the very settings responsible for their well-being.²

Characteristics of Vulnerable Populations (children, elderly and developmentally disabled)

- Dependent on others for basic needs
- Impaired cognitive ability
- Over-trusting authority figures
- Difficulty communicating effectively

How California Protects Vulnerable Populations beyond criminal background checks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILDREN</th>
<th>ELDERLY</th>
<th>DD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child abuse registries track substantiated and alleged abuse investigations.</td>
<td>Nursing homes are staffed by certified nurses, whose quality care is tracked in the nurse aide registry.</td>
<td>No protection.</td>
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The PROBLEM:

44% of abusers make contact with their victims as unlicensed, direct care workers.⁴ If caught, investigated, and/or fired, many abusers move on to another agency—because they can. Current California privacy laws prevent prospective employers from accessing information about abusers. Without such knowledge, employers continue to hire abusive caregivers and the cycle continues.

The SOLUTION:

Create a registry that tracks cases of substantiated abuse and flags care givers that have established patterns of inconclusive abuse to be accessible by prospective employers. Currently, registries are available for children and the elderly in California but are absent for individuals with developmental disabilities. Why leave this vulnerable population any more vulnerable?
FAQ’s...

Q: Who will create and monitor the registry?
A: A consultant will create the database. An inter-agency employee will oversee the registry, data input and related events.

Q: Who will contribute information to the registry?
A: All those conducting non-criminal investigations: Department of Health Services, Community Care Licensing and Adult Protective Services.

Q: What information will be included in the registry?
A: Investigating agency, name of abuser, other identifier, type of abuse, findings, date of findings.

Q: What information is accessible in the registry?
A: All substantiated findings. Records of individuals with 3+ abuse investigations in a 5 year period will be flagged.

Q: Who can access the data collected?
A: Data will be publicly accessible (in part to benefit those seeking private, in-home care). Licensed care agencies will be required to check all prospective employees against the registry before hiring but will retain hiring discretion. It is recommended that agencies check their employee list against the registry every six months.

Q: How can the registry be accessed?
A: The data is available through an online database.

Q: How will the database be financially supported?
A: The database will be user fee-based or supported through grants.

Q: Don’t criminal background checks address this issue?
A: No, most cases of abuse are never formally prosecuted.

Q: Should the registry be merged with an existing registry, such as the CNA registry?
A: No. Differences in licensure and logistics (i.e. reporting features) make the Child Abuse Index and CNA registry incompatible with what REACH proposes.

The REACH Coalition

Home of Guiding Hands
Developmental Services Continuum, Inc.
Noah Homes, Inc.
Seeds Educational Services, Inc.
San Diego Regional Center
Area Board XIII
H&W Independent Solutions, Inc.
P.R.I.D.E. Inc.
Humboldt Community Access and Resource Center
Country Hills Healthcare Center
CPSRC Inc. Adult Development Center
St. Madeleine Sophie’s Center
Supporting Alternative Solutions, Inc.
Casa de los Amigos
United Cerebral Palsy—San Diego
Developmental Services Network (DSN)
Toward Maximum Independence, Inc.
Unyeway

Your Name Here!

Benefits of the Registry

- The registry will address a critical need to protect individuals with developmental disabilities and the agencies that care for them statewide. It will also afford this population the same protection offered to other vulnerable populations in California.
- Currently, 56% of people with developmental disabilities in California are under the age of 21. The number of people being diagnosed with a developmental disability increases yearly. Instituting a registry now will improve the adult care system receiving these youth in the near future.
- A registry will help reduce the workload of state and private agencies that spend a significant amount of time and resources conducting investigations.

References:
3 http://ucicorrections.seweb.uci.edu/ppt
4 Sobsey and Doe 1991 Patterns of Sexual Abuse and Assault. Journal of Sexuality and Disability, 9 (3), 243-259.
5 http://www.dds.ca.gov/factsstats/pdf/factbook_8th.pdf

Contact REACH to join the coalition!

CAL_ReachProject@yahoo.com
Becky Lee    LeeB@leaders.ccl.org
Maureen Carasiti    carasiti@cox.net
Paige Simpson    paigesimpson@gmail.com
Jessica Towne-Cardenas    JTowne@ccssd.org

Other states with abuse registries protecting the developmentally disabled:

- Delaware
- Wisconsin
- Idaho
- Louisiana
- Iowa
- New Mexico
- Ohio
- Vermont

All 50 states have abuse registries protecting children and elderly.

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