

# 2014 Mom-Baby Bills

## Priority State Legislation



5.1.2014

### **BACKGROUND:**

Crittenton's legacy is rooted in service to the pregnant and parenting population. The first Crittenton agency, founded in the 1800's, provided safe options for young women and their children lacking any support or resources. Today, that work continues as we serve pregnant and parenting dependents in Southern California that are clients in our residential treatment centers and/or living in the community. Our long history working with this population informs our support of legislation that:

- Acknowledges the unique challenges of pregnant and parenting dependents and supports their needs in a comprehensive, holistic way;
- Ensures sufficient training, education and preparation for caregivers of these dependents and their children;
- Gives specialized services whether in community-based or out of home settings for this population;
- Reforms the current structure to provide services to pregnant and parenting dependents that will prepare them for their future following their exit from the system.

### **PRIORITY BILLS:**

#### **AB 1579 (Stone) Healthy Babies Act of 2014**

Extends CalWORKS eligibility to qualified low-income pregnant women, allowing for benefits to be received beginning the month after which verification information is submitted regarding her pregnancy to the appropriate county. Crittenton supports this bill as it provides an avenue for the transition aged population (18-21) to begin receiving services earlier in their pregnancy where possible. Additionally, the bill makes legislative findings that reflect the field's emphasis on better understanding of the mental health of a mother in crisis, and the long-term effects of vulnerable mothers preparing for their child's birth without adequate supports.

#### **AB 2111 (Ammiano) Child development services: pregnant and parenting teens: CalSAFE**

Reestablishes the CalSAFE program (provides educational and other support to pregnant and parenting teens) following the categorical funding for CalSAFE being rolled into a block grant. Makes CalSAFE an optional program for local education agencies, but puts oversight and accountability measures in place for schools choosing to operate a program geared toward teenaged parents. Crittenton supports efforts to include and work alongside the parent's school in order to improve outcomes and allow for a comprehensive structure that stabilizes the teen parent in their own environment, when possible.

#### **AB 2668 (Quirk-Silva) Foster care: nonminor dependent parents**

Allows a non-minor dependent (NMD) who is also parenting and living in a Supervised Independent Living Plan (SILP) to receive additional supports. If the NMD enters in to a shared responsibility plan with an appropriate adult mentor and the county agency with jurisdiction, the NMD then receives an additional \$200 monthly stipend. The shared responsibility plan must be designed to preserve and strengthen the parent family unit and outlines how the adult mentor will assist the NMD such as transportation, child care, babysitting, etc. Crittenton supports this bill as it benefits the youth two-fold: first, by building in a mentorship we know that NMD's will have a steady supportive individual with which to build a relationship that can stabilize them as parents. Secondly, the additional financial supports can relieve the stress of being a new parent who is also system involved. This bill makes promising steps to fill the gaps of support and supervision that are usually provided to a young, new parent who has the benefit of a healthy family of origin.