

CALIFORNIA AIMS TO PROTECT KIDS FROM EFFECTS OF TRAUMA, OTHER ISSUES

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Last week, [California officials announced](#) the creation of the Bureau of Children's Justice, a new initiative that aims to protect and improve the health of children in the state, the *Los Angeles Times*' "L.A. Now" reports.

The bureau, created by state Attorney General Kamala Harris (D), will seek to combat:

- Childhood trauma;
- Education discrimination;
- Human trafficking; and
- Student truancy.

Harris said the initiative will focus in particular on children in the foster care system. Such children are more likely than their peers to have disabilities and face other challenges, according to "L.A. Now."

The new bureau will be staffed by five criminal and civil rights attorneys, as well as legal experts on areas related to the initiative's goals (Watanabe, "L.A. Now," *Los Angeles Times*, 2/12).

Calif. DOJ Selected for National Childhood Trauma Initiative

Meanwhile, Harris also announced that the state's Department of Justice was selected by the federal DOJ to take part in the national Defending Childhood initiative.

[According to a release](#), trauma can increase the likelihood that children will experience:

- Academic challenges;
- Drugs and alcohol misuse; and
- Suicide.

Under the initiative, at-risk children in California will be screened for exposure to trauma at:

- Child welfare and juvenile justice system appointments;
- Pediatrician visits; and
- School (Office of the Attorney General release, 2/12).