

The California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program

**A Report to the Legislature
As required by California *Education Code* Section 54748(I)**

**Submitted by
California Department of Education
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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Executive Summary	ii
Background Information	1
Program Description	1
Program History	1
Student Eligibility.....	1
Progress Towards Meeting the Legislative Goals	1
Goal 1	2
Goal 2	2
Goal 3	2
Goal 4	3
Goal 5	3
Goal 6	3
Goal 7	3
Goal 8	4
Goal 9	4
Goal 10	4
Goal 11	4
The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Student	5
The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Female Student	5
The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Male Student	6
The Typical Child of a Cal-SAFE Program Student	6
The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Student Who Exited the Program	7
Data Sources	8
Endnotes	9

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**California Department of Education
The California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program
Legislative Report**

Executive Summary

The California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program, established by Senate Bill 1064 (Chapter 1078, Statutes of 1998), began serving expectant and parenting students and their children during the 2000-01 school year. Data collected and analyzed between 2000 through 2004 showed positive outcomes, benefits, and cost effectiveness of the program. Most notably, more than three-fourths of the students who left the program successfully completed their high school education, and a significant majority of the children born to Cal-SAFE students were born healthy. The Cal-SAFE Program offers a comprehensive, integrated, community-linked, school-based program that:

- Improves the educational experiences for expectant and parenting students
- Increases the availability of support services for these students
- Provides child care and development services for their children

Since its implementation, the Cal-SAFE Program has touched the lives of approximately 30,000 expectant and parenting teens and their 20,000 young children. Over 150 agencies located in 44 of the state's 58 counties provide a wide range of academic and support services.

Data indicate substantive progress on the program goals established by the Legislature. Key outcomes include the following:

- Over 75 percent of the students left the Cal-SAFE Program having successfully completed their high school education. This graduation rate for teen mothers far exceeds the 20 percent rate cited in the authorizing legislation as a deficit needing action. Over 65 percent of the exiting students indicated that they would pursue further education or employment. Most planned to enroll in a local community college.
- Overwhelmingly, students in the Cal-SAFE Program did not have a repeat birth or father a repeat pregnancy while enrolled in the program. Less than 3 percent of the students were expecting another child when they enrolled or exited the program. Less than 1 percent had a repeat pregnancy while enrolled in the program.
- The vast majority of children born while their parents were enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program were healthy. Only 7.29 percent weighed less than 2,500 grams at birth (the definition of low birth weight). This percentage is lower than the national low birth weight rate of 13.8 percent for mothers under 15 and 9.9 percent for mothers aged 15 to 19.
- Over 75 percent of the children of Cal-SAFE students attended a child care center sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program and received programming and services based on their assessed developmental needs. Furthermore, 94 percent of the children enrolled in child care sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program were up-to-date on their immunization schedules. This percentage substantially exceeds the immunization rates for children 19 to 35 months nationally (82 percent) and in California (81 percent).

The California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program

Background Information

Program Description

The California School Age Families Education (Cal-SAFE) Program is a comprehensive, integrated, community-linked, school-based program that serves expectant and parenting students and their children. The Cal-SAFE Program is designed to improve the educational experience, increase the availability of support services for enrolled students, and provide child care and development services for their children. The program provides the first opportunity for local educational agencies throughout California to access sufficient resources to support a seamless, cost-effective service delivery system from point of entry into the program until graduation.

Program History

Senate Bill 1064 (Chapter 1078, Statutes of 1998) established the Cal-SAFE Program (California *Education Code* [EC] sections 54740 through 54749.5). Section 54748(l) requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to submit an evaluation report to the Legislature commencing March 1, 2005, and every five years thereafter. The program became operational July 1, 2000, and incorporated many elements of programs formerly known as the Pregnant Minors Program (PMP), School Age Parenting and Infant Development (SAPID) Program, and the Pregnant and Lactating Students (PALS) Program, administered by the CDE.

Student Eligibility

Female and male students age 18 and younger who have not graduated from high school may voluntarily enroll in the Cal-SAFE Program if they are an expectant parent, a custodial parent, or a non-custodial parent taking an active role in the care and supervision of their child. An eligible student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is eligible as long as there is an active IEP. If a student does not have an IEP and is continuously enrolled in the program and has not graduated before reaching age 19, the student may be enrolled for one additional semester. As long as teen parents are enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program, their children are eligible for services until age five or entry into kindergarten, whichever comes first.

Progress Towards Meeting the Program's Legislative Goals

EC Section 54742(b) lists 11 goals that guide the efforts of the Cal-SAFE Program. Data collected since the program's inception indicate substantive progress on these goals.

- Goal 1: A significant number of eligible female and male students in need of targeted supportive services related to school success will be served.
Since its implementation in the 2000-01 school year, the Cal-SAFE Program has touched the lives of over 30,000 expectant and/or parenting students and the nearly 20,000 young children of those students.
- Goal 2: Students shall have the opportunity to be continuously enrolled in the Cal-SAFE program through graduation from high school.
Since its implementation in July 2000, California funded 154 approved Cal-SAFE Program agencies, located in 44 of the state's 58 counties, which offered services to over 30,000 pregnant and/or parenting students. Ninety percent of these agencies served students and their children for three or more years, while 69 percent provided services throughout all five of the funded years. The 8 percent of the agencies that dropped out of the Cal-SAFE Program after only one or two years of funding did so because they could not sustain the needed services by using only the monies provided by the Cal-SAFE Program.
- During the five years of the Cal-SAFE Program, the approved agencies provided services at over 460 middle and high schools statewide. Many academic sites offered students in the Cal-SAFE Program the opportunity to enroll in a comprehensive high school setting. Less than 20 percent of the academic sites offered Cal-SAFE Program services in an "alternative school" setting, while only 10 percent of the Cal-SAFE Program academic sites were located at a middle or junior high school.**
- Goal 3: Students served who receive program services for one or more years will earn a high school diploma or its equivalent or demonstrate progress towards completion of education goals.
During the 2001-02, 2002-03, and 2003-04 school years, 76 percent of those students who exited* from the Cal-SAFE Program left having successfully completed their high school education, almost all having attained a high school diploma rather than taking the General Education Degree (GED) exam or the California High School Proficiency Exam (CHSPE). This graduation rate for teen mothers far exceeds the 20 percent expected graduation rate cited in the legislation authorizing the Cal-SAFE Program^A and the 30 percent

*Of the remaining percentage, 14 percent dropped out of school; 4 percent aged out, exceeding the age limit; and 6 percent left the program for other reasons such as miscarriage or loss of custody for their children.

cited by Berglas, Brindis, and Cohen in their 2003 report: *Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing in California*.^B

Goal 4: Students served who graduate will transition to postsecondary education, including a technical school, or into the world of work.

Over 65 percent of the students who exited the Cal-SAFE Program indicated that they would pursue further education or employment. Most planned to enroll in a local community college.

Goal 5: Students served and their children will not become welfare-dependent.

No data were available concerning Cal-SAFE Program students' dependence on welfare.

Goal 6: Students served will demonstrate effective parenting skills.

Although no specific data were collected to determine the quality of Cal-SAFE students' parenting skills, several data items can act as indicators.

- **100 percent of the students enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program received parenting and life skills training as part of their instructional schedules.**
- **94 percent of the children of students enrolled in child care sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program were up-to-date on their immunization schedule, while 89 percent of all children of Cal-SAFE students were up-to-date. These percentages substantially exceed the immunization rates for children 19 to 35 months nationally (82 percent) and in California (81 percent).^C**
- **Almost 54 percent of the students reported having a high degree of involvement with their child's other parent. This could indicate that both the mother and father both provide parenting to the child.**
- **Finally, over 75 percent of children of Cal-SAFE students attended a child care center sponsored by Cal-SAFE. Placing their children in a quality child care setting demonstrates effective parenting decisions.**

Goal 7: Students served will not have a repeat birth or father a repeat pregnancy before graduating from high school.

Overwhelmingly, students in the Cal-SAFE Program did not have a repeat birth or father a repeat pregnancy while enrolled in the program. Fewer than 3 percent of the students were expecting another child when they enrolled. Furthermore, only 3.45 percent were pregnant with another child when they exited the program. Finally, data from the 2001-02 school year showed that less than 1

percent of the students had a repeat pregnancy while enrolled in the program. These percentages fall considerably below the 25 percent^D repeat pregnancy rate cited by the *EC Section 54741*, authorizing the Cal-SAFE Program and by Berglas, Brindis, and Cohen in their 2003 report: *Adolescent Pregnancy and Childbearing in California*.^B

Goal 8: Pregnant students served will not have a low birth weight baby, **The data show that only 7.29 percent of the children born while their parents were enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program weighed less than 2,500 grams at birth (the definition of low birth weight). This is lower than the national rate of 13.8 percent for mothers under 15 and 9.9 percent for mothers aged 15 to 19.**^E

Goal 9: Children of enrolled teen parents will receive child care and development services based upon the assessed developmental and health needs of each child.

Over 75 percent of the children of Cal-SAFE students attended a child care center sponsored by Cal-SAFE. Within 60 days of initial enrollment, the center's staff assessed each child's social, emotional, physical, and learning competencies using the Desired Results Development Profiles. The staff then used this information, along with subsequent periodic assessments, to design programming and services to meet the developmental needs of the children attending the center. This child-centered programming mirrors research-proven practices that prepare children for success in school.^F

Goal 10: Children of enrolled teen parents will receive health screening and immunizations except when the custodial parent annually provides a written request for an exemption pursuant to Section 49451 and Section 120365 of the California *Health and Safety Code*.

94 percent of the children of students enrolled in child care sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program were up-to-date on their immunization schedule, while 89 percent of all children of Cal-SAFE students were up-to-date. These percentages substantially exceed the immunization rates for children 19 to 35 months nationally (82 percent) and in California (81 percent).^C

Goal 11: Children of enrolled teen parents will have enhanced school readiness, demonstrate progress towards meeting their assessed developmental goals, or both.

Although no specific data were collected to determine the level of school readiness of children whose parents were enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program, we do know that over 75 percent of the children attended a child care center sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program

that employed child development practices shown by research^F to have positive effects on a child's readiness for school and future test scores.

The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Student

Since its inception in July 2000, the Cal-SAFE Program has served over 30,000 pregnant and/or parenting students across the state of California.

Overwhelmingly, the typical student served by the Cal-SAFE Program was:

- Female
- Single
- Hispanic
- Aged sixteen or seventeen
- In the tenth or eleventh grade
- Still under the guardianship of her parents
- Living in a highly populated urban area rather than a moderately populated county or rural location

Furthermore, the typical Cal-SAFE Program student did not have a job nor was she seeking a job when she enrolled.

The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Female Student

Almost 95 percent of the students served by the Cal-SAFE Program were female, and most entered the program either pregnant or parenting but not both. Indeed, only 3 percent of the Cal-SAFE students were pregnant and parenting when they enrolled.

If she was pregnant when she enrolled, the typical Cal-SAFE student:

- Entered the program during her second trimester
- Was sixteen or seventeen years of age
- Lived in a densely populated urban area rather than a moderately populated county or a rural location

If she was parenting at entry, the typical Cal-SAFE student parented:

- Only one child whom she had given birth
- A child for whom she held custody

If she gave birth to her child while in the Cal-SAFE Program, the typical student:

- Delivered a healthy baby 38 weeks after conception
- Began prenatal care in her first trimester
- Received prenatal care in a health care clinic

- Paid for her prenatal care through Medi-Cal
- Spent 2.69 days in the hospital at delivery

The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Male Student

Although males made up only 5 percent of the over 30,000 students in the Cal-SAFE Program, the typical male student mirrored the characteristics of his female counterpart.

The typical male Cal-SAFE Program student was:

- Single
- Hispanic
- Sixteen or seventeen years of age
- In the eleventh grade
- Under the guardianship of his parents
- Not working or seeking employment when he enrolled

Furthermore, the typical male Cal-SAFE Program student was either parenting or had a partner who was pregnant but not both. The typical male student with a pregnant partner tended to enroll when his partner was in her second trimester of pregnancy. Finally, if parenting, the typical male student had only one child.

The Typical Child of a Cal-SAFE Program Student

The central mission of the Cal-SAFE Program has centered on helping pregnant and parenting teens stay in school and complete their high school education. In fulfilling this mission, the program has also touched the lives of 20,000 infants and young children whose parents were enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program. Over 75 percent of these children attended a child care center sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program.

The typical child born while the parent was enrolled in the Cal-SAFE Program:

- Was a boy
- Had a mother who lived in a densely populated county
- Had a normal birth weight
- Showed no evidence at birth of a serious medical condition or a developmental delay
- Remained in the hospital for 1.04 days after his birth
- Had a mother who planned to have him stay in child care center sponsored by the Cal-SAFE Program when she returned to school

The typical child of a Cal-SAFE Program student:

- Was an infant under 12 months of age when the student parent enrolled
- Was a boy
- Was healthy with no serious medical condition

- Was developmentally normal
- Was very up-to-date on his immunizations
- Weighed within the normal range at birth
- Stayed at a child care center sponsored by Cal-SAFE while his parent(s) attended school
- Lived in a home where the household members spoke English as their primary language
- Experienced a high level of involvement with both his parents

The typical child who attended a Cal-SAFE-sponsored child care center:

- Was an infant under the age of six months
- Was a boy
- Attended the center five days a week for 6.5 hours per day
- Was very up-to-date on his immunizations

The Typical Cal-SAFE Program Student Who Exited the Program

Data collected during 2001-2004 showed that slightly over 8,000 students exited the Cal-SAFE Program. Evaluators defined exits as any student who left the program and was not expected to return. Reasons for exiting the program ranged from the positive such as graduation, to the negative, such as dropping out or miscarriage. Overwhelmingly, the reasons for exiting the Cal-SAFE Program fell in the positive area, with 75 percent Cal-SAFE Program students having completed their high school education.

Overall, the typical Cal-SAFE Program student who exited the program:

- Left having received a high school diploma
- Was eighteen years of age
- Planned to enroll in a local community college
- Was not working or seeking employment at the time he/she left the program
- Was not married
- Was not pregnant
- Was parenting only one child

Data Sources

The major source of data shared in this report came from the GradStar Management Information System (MIS), developed and maintained by the Branagh Information Group, under contract with the CDE. Staff at each of the Cal-SAFE Program agencies collected the data and entered the information into the GradSTAR MIS.

The following is a complete listing of the data sources:

1. GradStar MIS data received as of December 31, 2004
 - a. Student Enrollment Form Parts I, II, III
 - b. Pregnancy Outcome Form
 - c. Student Exit/Temporary Withdrawal Form
 - d. Child Care Enrollment Form
2. CDE Form F Site Information for each of the five funded school years
3. CDE provided contact information for the program coordinators, site leaders, and child care coordinators for each of the five funded school years
4. Data from the Implementation Surveys conducted in Spring 2001

Endnotes

^A From *Education Code (EC)* Section 54741, authorizing the Cal-SAFE Program. “(f) Eighty percent of females who become mothers before the age of 18 do not finish high school, and 40 percent of females who give birth by age 15 do not complete the 8th grade.”

^B Berglas, N., Brindis, C., & Cohen, J. (2003). *Adolescent pregnancy and childbearing in California*. Retrieved March 1, 2005, from <http://www.library.ca.gov/html/statseq2a.cfm>

^C Center for Disease Control. (July 30, 2004) *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*. Retrieved January 30, 2005, from <http://www.immunofacts.com/statistical.asp> See the section on Childhood Immunization Delivery by State and Major Cities: 2003 Levels Among Children 19-35 Months, Table 2: Estimated vaccination coverage levels with 4:3:1*, 4:3:1:3†, 4:3:1:3:3§, and 4:3:1:3:3:1¶ series among children aged 19-35 months, by state and selected urban area – National Immunization Survey, United States, 2003.

^D From (*EC*) Section 54741, authorizing the Cal-SAFE Program. “(d) Approximately one-quarter of teen mothers in California will experience a second or subsequent birth while in their teen years.” Also from Berglas, N., Brindis, C., & Cohen, J. (2003). *Adolescent pregnancy and childbearing in California*. Retrieved March 1, 2005, from <http://www.library.ca.gov/html/statseq2a.cfm>

^E Center for Disease Control. (December 17, 2003). From *National vital statistics reports*, Volume 52, Number 10. Retrieved January 30, 2005, from <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/births.htm> See section titled Births: Final Data for 2002. Also see Table 32: Percent low birthweight by smoking status, age, and race and Hispanic origin of mother: Total of 49 reporting states and the District of Columbia, 2002 on page 73.

^F Ramey, C. T., Gallagher, J. J., Campbell, F. A., Wasik, B. H. & Sparling, J. (2004). Carolina Abecedarian Project and the Carolina Approach to Responsive Education (CARE), 1972-1992. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, 2004. The research indicated that the children in the intervention group showed higher cognitive scores and higher achievement in both reading and math when they later entered school.