



# PREVENTION NETWORK

## BACKSTORY

The Prevention Network is an alliance of social service providers and community residents fighting to strengthen the social safety net of South Los Angeles to increase access to prevention and treatment services.

*“We believed that social service providers were critical agents in stabilizing vulnerable families as populations, who get involved in broader community organizing efforts, including public policy and advocacy work, once stabilized.”*  
 – Congressmember Karen Bass, Community Coalition Founder

Social service providers- people who work in human service organizations, such as homeless shelters, child health clinics, and drug treatment centers- were the first to see the fallout of the crack cocaine epidemic as they struggled to meet the needs of clients who poured into their agencies seeking resources to deal with unemployment and addiction. Frustrated by tough on crime policies that turned a public health epidemic, crack cocaine addiction, into an opportunity to move aggressively against communities of colors, South LA providers worked to identify solutions that addressed the root causes of addiction and crime in local neighborhoods.

In 1990, South LA providers convened a conference entitled “Crack: Crisis in the African American Community”, and Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment was born. A few years later, the Coalition formally launched the Prevention Network- an alliance of South L.A. social service agencies providing drug treatment, transitional housing, mental health, and youth and other services in the community.



/CoCoSouthLA

## OUR WORK

---

Over the last 25 years, social service providers in the Prevention Network have identified key issues that drove decisive campaigns in Community Coalition's history, including "Rebuild South Central Without Liquor Stores", which resulted in the closure of 150 liquor stores in South L.A. after the 1992 civil unrest.

In 2000, South L.A. providers launched the "Family Care Not Foster Care Campaign" to shift resources from private foster care agencies to extended family members caring for children no longer living with their biological parents; and the Ex-Offender Taskforce to address the unmet needs of residents returning home after incarceration and remove barriers to housing, employment and education for formerly incarcerated individuals.

Most recently, network members organized to defeat the "Community Care Facilities Ordinance" that would reduce the availability of drug and mental health treatment and affordable housing for poor and working families. The Prevention Network led local and regional efforts to pass California's Proposition 47, a historic bill stopping the use of excessive prison sentences for minor crimes and invested prison spending savings into prevention and treatment services.

## MOVING FORWARD

---

The Prevention Network continues to direct policy initiatives and resource distribution according to the real human needs they see and address on a daily basis. In September 2021, the PN officially relaunched with a kickoff event featuring over two dozen service providers. The work takes on all the more importance as we strive to recover from the pandemic which exacerbated the public health and economic crisis plaguing Black & Brown families throughout South LA.

Our advocacy work will also take on creating equitable funding structures to ensure the money goes to where it's most needed. Now more than ever City and County funding must be redirected from policing and punishment toward systems of care like affordable housing, mental healthcare, youth programs, substance abuse treatment clinics, workforce development, and more. The service providers in the Prevention Network can, have and will create true public safety when/if properly funded and build a thriving community.

