



American Academy of Pediatrics, California
5000 Campus Drive Newport Beach, CA 92660
Phone (626) 796-1632 | **Fax** (626) 628-3382
Email: office@aap-ca.org | www.AAP-CA.org

March 9, 2020

The Honorable Eloise Reyes
State Capitol
P.O. Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0047

RE: AB 2051 (Reyes) Foster care: foster sibling relationship.
AAP-CA Position: Support

Dear Assembly Member Reyes:

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California (AAP-CA) representing the over 5,000 pediatrician members of California AAP Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 statewide, strongly supports your proposed legislation AB 2051 as introduced on February 3, 2020, which would state the intent of the Legislature to maintain a foster sibling relationship for children in out-of-home placement and would define “foster sibling relationship” to mean a relationship between children who are placed together in foster care and develop a sibling-like bond, despite having no relationship through blood or adoption.

According to the Children’s Bureau at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, positive sibling relationships reduce levels of depression and anxiety and placement with siblings in foster care can help maintain positive mental health. Placement with siblings in foster care may also improve school performance and support bonding with foster caregivers. California law already directs child welfare agencies and the courts to develop and maintain biological sibling relationships, but children don’t always define who is and isn’t a sibling based on biology. A child’s definition of a sibling might include step siblings, foster siblings, or other close relatives or nonrelatives with whom they live or have lived.

AB 2051 creates a more expansive definition of who is and isn’t a sibling by including foster sibling relationships and protecting foster sibling visitation rights and the development and maintenance of these relationships thereby extending the benefits of those relationships to children already experiencing separation from family.

Pediatricians across the state of California strongly support AB 2051. Thank you for your public service and leadership on behalf of the health and well-being of the children, youth, and families of California.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Graff". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Nancy Graff, MD FAAP
Member, State Government Affairs Committee
American Academy of Pediatrics, California

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California is the state-level advocacy organization of the four AAP California Chapters. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of all children and youth in California and to support the professional needs of our California Chapter member pediatricians.

We are a 501(c)4 nonprofit legally incorporated in California.