

We Can Help!

If you are a parent who currently has or has had involvement with the Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services, Parents In Partnership can help you. Feeling frustrated, angry or just confused? Call a Parent Partner that has been through the DCFS system and understands what you're going through! The PIP Warm Line in your area is a great place to get your questions answered, receive guidance, or just have someone listen that knows what you're going through.

MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR VISITATION

Visitation is one of the most important factors in maintaining a close bond with your child and has been found crucial to successful reunification. Sometimes parents feel awkward about having their visit "supervised." But, there are some things you can do to make your visitation fun and enjoyable. Here are some tips to making the most of your visitation:

- Know your visitation schedule in advance and make sure you consistently attend the visits.

Your children look forward to seeing you, so it is important for them to know when they are going to see you again.

- Come prepared for your visits.

Bring supplies and activities for you and your child whether that be your child's favorite toys or books, a game for you to play, food or snacks to enjoy during the visit. These are great ways to keep the visit fun and interactive for your child.

- Utilize the things you are learning in your programs.

Visits are a good place to begin using the skills you are

learning in your parenting or other programs.

- Keep a journal of what is happening in your visits.

This will help you remember what has occurred and can be used in connection with your other case activity logs to keep track of your compliance with the Court or DCFS orders.

- Talk with the social worker about what needs to happen for your visits to become unmonitored.

It is always a good idea to talk to with your social worker and discuss any concerns you or the social worker have about the visits. Ask for clear instructions about what needs to happen for your visits to become unmonitored and work toward those

goals. Be sure to keep documenting your progress in your case activity logs

- Don't talk about the case or make promises to your children during visits.

This is very difficult but necessary. Visits are for you and your child to spend quality time together. Don't waste time talking to or about the caregiver, the social worker, the other parent, or what is happening in the case.

- Enjoy your time with your child!

Visitation is your time with your child. Make sure you enjoy every moment of your time together.

Parents in Partnership Participating Offices



- Belvedere Office ~ 5835 S. Eastern Ave. ~ Commerce, CA 90040 ~ Warmline 323-725-4670
- Compton Office (East) ~ 921 E. Compton Blvd. ~ Compton, CA 90221 ~ Warmline 310-263-2184 & 310-668-6623
- Compton Office (West) ~ 11539 Hawthorne Blvd ~ Hawthorne, CA 90250 ~ Warmline 310-263-2184 & 310-668-6623
- Chatsworth ~ 20151 Nordhoff St. Chatsworth, CA 91311m ~ Warmline 818-717-4014
- El Monte Office ~ 4024 Durfee Ave. ~ El Monte, CA 91732 ~ Warmline 626-455-4712
- Glendora Office ~ 725 S. Grand Ave. Glendora, CA 91740 ~ 626-691-1827
- Lancaster Office ~ 300 E. Avenue K6, Lancaster, CA 93535 ~ Warmline 661-471-1002
- Metro North Office ~ 1933 S. Broadway, Suite 6 ~ Los Angeles, CA 90007 ~ Warmline 213-763-1757
- Palmdale Office ~ 39959 Sierra Hwy ~ Palmdale, CA 93550 ~ Warmline 661-223-4232
- Pasadena Office ~ 532 E. Colorado Blvd. Pasadena, CA 91101 ~ 626-229-3473
- Pomona Office ~ 801 Corporate Center Drive ~ Pomona, CA 91768 ~ Warmline 909-802-1452
- Santa Clarita Office ~ 28490 Avenue Stanford ~ Santa Clarita, CA 91355 ~ Warmline 661-702-6280
- Santa Fe Springs Office ~ 10355 Slusher Dr., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670 ~ 562-903-5085
- South County Office ~ 4060 Watson Plaza Drive ~ Lakewood, CA 90712 ~ Warmline 562-420-6328
- Torrance Office ~ 2325 Crenshaw Blvd. ~ Torrance, CA 90501 ~ 310-972-3133
- Vermont Corridor Office ~ 8300 S. Vermont Ave. ~ Los Angeles, CA 90044 ~ 323-965-7068

WHAT'S INSIDE:



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Parents working with other parents toward the goal of reunifying or maintaining their family

THE PIP POST

All stories are provided by parents and in their own words

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ISSUE 1

A MOTHER'S JOURNEY THROUGH ADDICTION AND RECOVERY WITH CHILDREN

My name is Kathy and this story of how I became involved with the DCFS system:

My case was open in 1985, with my first daughter due to substance abuse and use. My drugs of choice were cocaine, marijuana and alcohol. I was court ordered into a substance abuse program. I went, enrolled and completed my program after one year. After I completed the program and stayed compliance with all my court orders, I was reunified with my daughter. I was clean and sober for about 5 years until I relapsed and begin to use again.

Through my addiction, I had 3 more children, each 2 years apart. My children were removed because I continued to use and abuse the substances despite my children being removed. I was in and out of treatment programs and was not ready to stop using.

About 6 years into my addiction, I got fed up and tired of myself. I was tired of being on the streets using, and, I was tired of "me." I feel spiritually bankrupt. I wanted "me" back so I decided to reenroll into a treatment program. I asked God to help guide and help me to make me strong enough to keep "me" in the program. Throughout my addiction,

I did not think about my children.

Through trials and tribulations, I finally completed the treatment program. I stayed clean and sober. After celebrating my 3rd year anniversary of remaining clean and sober, I filed a 388 petition asking the Court to return my son.

My eldest daughter was an adult by the time I filed the petition. My other two children had been adopted by my sister. The Court granted my 388 petition and I was reunified with my son. Today, he has been home with me for 7 years. He's in college and currently employed. I thank God everyday for DCFS intervention in my case.

The Parents in Partnership program approached me and asked me to come back and share my story with other parents who are new to the DCFS system. Since becoming involved with the Parents in Partnership Program, I have been flown to 4 different States (Chicago, Minnesota, Arizona and Washington) and participated in conferences and share with other parent advocacy groups around the nation. These are some of the most rewarding and greatest experiences for me to be able to tell my story and inspire other family that "they can do it".

After becoming employed with the Parents in Partnership Program, I was able to attend the Core Training which helped to prepare me to be a Parent Partner. This program has changed my life and I love supporting the parents to help them navigate the system and understand the process of child welfare. I participate in TDM (Team Decision Making) meetings, facilitate support groups, host parent orientations, and respond to parents who call the warmline (message phone). One of my favorite parts of being a Parent Partner is the community outreach. I love giving back to the community. I have been clean and sober for 11 years from cocaine, marijuana and alcohol.



CAN PIP HELP ME GET MY KIDS BACK?

The short answer is, YES!

A recent study suggested that parents who participate in the Parents In Partnership Parent Orientation are 30% more likely to regain custody of their children in 1 year or less compared to parents who don't participate. In one study, parents who participated in the Parents In Partnership Parent Orientation regained custody of their children, on average, 7 months sooner than parents who did not participate. Participating parents have commented that our services are effective because of the support from parent partners and their ability to convey courage and hope.

How can they help? Parent Partners host monthly or bi-monthly Parent Orientation that assist parents in understanding the DCFS system which can help parents reunify with their children and getting their DCFS case closed. Parent Partners can accompany you to your TDM meeting in order to provide you with support. Parent Partners can assist you with finding community resources that will help you in doing what DCFS asks you to do to get your kids back. Parent Partners offer help through a telephone warm line where you can call in and discuss your concerns with a Parent Partner who is there to help you. Parent support groups are another place where Parent Partners can listen to you when you are frustrated and provide support and guidance. Parent Partners are also available to speak with you in the lobby of your local DCFS office and can provide additional information about the full array of services Parents in Partnership provides.

INCARCERATED FATHERS: WE WANT YOU!



In February 2014, PIP was granted access to the Los Angeles County Jail North County Correctional Facility to provide parent orientations for incarcerated fathers. The turnout was enormous. Nearly 60 incarcerated fathers were in attendance at two parent orientations held at the NCCF facility. These fathers learned information about navigating the DCFS system and were given the opportunity to ask questions of both PIPs and DCFS staff about the steps they can take, while incarcerated, to re-

gain custody of their children. At the request of these fathers, PIP was also able to extend an opportunity for a parent support group for the incarcerated father's at this facility. In early March 2014, the PIP hosted its first ever parent support group for incarcerated fathers inside of the Los Angeles County Jail. PIP looks forward to continued collaboration with the Los Angeles County Jail Systems which would allow PIP to continue to expand these services for incarcerated parents.

PIP OFFERS ORIENTATIONS TO MOTHERS AT CRDF, ALSO KNOWN AS LYNWOOD

Parents in Partnership (PIP) has successfully partnered with the Los Angeles County Century Regional Detention Women's Facility. CRDF also known as the Women's County Jail or Lynwood has collabo-

rated with PIP to deliver Parent Orientations to inmates housed in the facility. Attendance at these orientations has been tremendous. Many of the women within this facility have open cases with DCFS and are

eager to receive information about what they can do while incarcerated to help them get their children back when they are released. PIPs are actively helping incarcerated mothers in making a connection with their DCFS social workers and linking them to community agencies to help them comply with required programs upon their release. PIP is holding these Parent Orientations twice a month at this facility.

1ST ANNUAL PARENTS HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

In December of 2013, Lakewood, Torrance and Compton Parents in Partnership PIPs had their first Annual Christmas Parent Celebration for parents who are in the reunification process, complying with DCFS, and the Court's Case Plan goals. These parents are also actively participating in the Parent Orientations and Support Groups held in their community. Through collaboration with DCFS and

Tower of Faith Church located in the City of Compton, PIP was able to provide gifts for these parents, and through hard fund raising and commitment PIP was also able to provide food, games and achieve this first

time Holiday event. These parents were excited to be included in this event and felt grateful to be acknowledged for their efforts and continued hard work in getting their children back. Way to Go Parents!!!





LETTERS FROM OUR PARENTS



Lancaster Office

Partner's encouragement and support, I don't think I would have been able to keep my newborn in my care and eventually reunify with my two-year-old son. Parents in Partnership has kept me focused on what I needed to do and always had time to just listen to me vent. She also gave me strength when I felt like giving up. Today, I may have some struggles, but one thing is for sure, I can always count on my Parent Partner to be there when I need her. I am so thankful to the Parents in Partnership program. It has been a blessing in my life."

Cassandra Currier

"My name is Cassandra Currier and I am a parent who has been involved with Parents in Partnership for about a year now. My case came to the attention of DCFS because I had neglected to get my kid immunized in a timely manner and kept an unclean house. My children ended up in foster care. I was pregnant, frustrated and felt alone. While at one of my many visits to the Lancaster DCFS office, I was approached by a parent partner in the lobby and was invited to attend an orientation. I was hesitant to attend at first, but, decided I would go anyway. I am very happy that I made the decision to go because it was there that I heard Parent Partner, Melanie's story. Her story sounded a lot like mine and she had gotten her kids back. Her story gave me the hope that I, too could get my kids back. At that orientation, I was given valuable resources that helped me get on track in complying with my case plan. From that day forward, I was able to be case compliant and have the opportunity to get my kid back. Since then, I have kept in contact with Melanie and she has guided me through each and every crisis I have encountered. Melanie is a blessing to me and my life. When it came time for me to give birth to my son, I was so nervous and anxious that DCFS was going to take my newborn. I had a TDM in which my Parent Partner came for support. During the TDM there were many things discussed and I thought I was going to lose my newborn for sure. However, the outcome was amazing. I got to keep my newborn boy in my custody and still continue to reunify with my other son. If it wasn't for my Parent



PARENTS IN PARTNERSHIP POPPING UP EVERYWHERE

The Parents in Partnership Program has been expanding over the past several years. From humble beginnings in only a few DCFS offices, the Parents in Partnership Program is now available County wide. The Parent Partners provide monthly Parent Orientations in a multitude of community locations and DCFS offices. Parent Partners also provide support and information for parents throughout many other community locations including local treatments programs, community service organizations and even the Los Angeles County jails. With the wide range of positive feedback received, Parents in Partnership is looking to expand even further. If you know a community member who would like Parents in Partnership to present information to their agency, please feel free to contact your local Parents in Partnership Warm line as indicated on page four (the back page).



PIPS ARE AVAILABLE TO SERVE YOU THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY

Did you know, the Parents in Partnership Program provides services to the parents of one of the largest child welfare organizations across the Country? In fact, the following statistics show exactly how much work parent partners throughout Los Angeles County did within the 2013 calendar year:

- Parent Partners had contact with 7,658 parents through the DCFS Warm Lines in each of the community offices
- Parent Partners had contact with 10,504 parents in DCFS office lobbies
- Parent Partners had outreach contact with 1,985 parents within the community
- Parents Partners made follow-up contact with 60,960 parents
- Parents Partners participated in 1,973 Team Decision Making (TDM) conferences
- Parents Partners held 274 support groups, in which 1,364 parents participated (245 in English with 1,293 parents participating and 29 in Spanish with 71 parents attending)
- Parents Partners had contact with 781 parents solely through CSW Referrals
- Parent Partners had contact with 703 parents through Court outreach at the Lancaster Courthouse (Departments 426 and 427)
- Parent Partners held 6 parent orientations in CRDF Lynwood, which serviced 149 parents