



News



Spring 2016 Issue #12

“Child Safety, Permanency, and Access to Effective and Caring Service”



The 2nd annual Mi Quinceañera featuring DCFS foster youth. (From L. to R.) Jessica, Natalie, Henessy, Lina, Supervisor Hilda Solis' Deputy Kimberly Ortega, DCFS Director Philip L. Browning, Ana, Valeria, Adriana and Shene (Story on Page 2)

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

We are pleased to welcome back the Department's new Chief Deputy, Brandon Nichols. Many of you probably remember Brandon when he was the Senior Deputy Director over Risk Management and Litigation or from his involvement in the Katie A. matter (i.e., implementation of foster care mental health services). He was selected as Chief Deputy after a nationwide search that lasted several months. He returns to us from County Counsel where he most recently worked on the County's Homeless Initiative and handled litigation with the U.S. Department of Justice over conditions in the County jails. Brandon has only been back on the job a short while, but says that he is happy to see the progress that has been made with hiring new social workers and implementation of the Core Practice Model. He believes both initiatives will support frontline staff which is one of the areas he intends to focus on in his new role as Chief Deputy. He will also be directly involved in our planning and implementation of the Continuum of Care Reform and Katie A. mental health services. May was Foster Care Awareness Month, and in addition to ongoing foster care expos and recruitment events, the Board honored five exemplary foster caregivers. Foster Care Counts held their 8th annual Foster Mother's Day Celebration with over 2,000 foster caregivers and youth being treated to a day of fun, entertainment, food and pampering. On May 24th, DCFS partnered with the Mixed Roots Foundation to have 1,500 foster youth and families attend a Dodgers game. Mixed Roots, a national leader in promoting multicultural foster care and adoption, participated in a first pitch ceremony and airing of a public service announcement. We hope you find the updates within on the Core Practice Model, Commercially Sexually Exploited Children, Transitional Shelter Care, and the Continuum of Care Reform, including Resource Family Approval, informative. 🏠

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Philip L. Browning
Director

Brandon Nichols
Chief Deputy Director

Diane Iglesias
Senior Deputy Director

Cynthia McCoy-Miller
Senior Deputy Director

Helen Berberian
Deputy Director
Clinical Resources and Services

Maryam Fatemi
Deputy Director
Service Bureau 1

Eric Marts
Deputy Director
Contract Services

Roberta Medina
Deputy Director
Specialized Response

Kym Renner
Deputy Director
Administrative Support

Dr. Charles Sophy
Medical Director

Rogelio Tapia
Administrative Deputy Director

Dawna Yokoyama
Deputy Director
Service Bureau 2

Madeline Roachell
Assistant Deputy Director
Operational Support Services

The 2nd Annual “Mi Quinceañera... A Dream Come True”



Last doll being presented to Jessica by her cousin



Valeria being interviewed by Telemundo

On March 12th, elegant gowns, radiant smiles, upbeat music, tasty food, fragrant flowers and a multitude of cheerful guests came together at La Plaza De Cultura y Artes in the City of Los Angeles for the second annual Mi Quinceañera. DCFS, Telemundo and Quinceañera.com, among other sponsors, united to host this event honoring eight foster youth: Natalie, Valeria, Adriana, Henessy, Shene, Lina, Jessica and Ana.

A Quinceañera is a rite-of-passage tradition celebrated by many Latino cultures to recognize the significance of a girl's transformation from childhood to young adulthood. The honorees were selected for their resilience in overcoming childhood struggles, and for their academic dedication and promising potential to thrive as young women in their communities.

This cultural milestone is intended to make these young woman feel special, create positive memories, build their confidence, and cultivate a sense of connection to their Latino heritage. The words “magical” and “unforgettable” truly describe the annual Mi Quinceañera. As Shene commented, “I have never felt so special and important.”

For more information on how to get involved with the Children's Trust Fund and support our foster youth, please contact Dominique Robinson at robind@dcfs.lacounty.gov 📧



DCFS representatives (From L. to R.) Neil Zanville, Mayra Villarreal, Keesee Gregory, Candice Brown, Donnetta Baker, Grace Lee, Dominique Robinson, Lucia Holguin, Ashley Vasquez, Stephanie Sanchez-Salazar, Philip Browning, Xiomara Flores-Holguin, Diane Iglesias, Cynthia McCoy-Miller, Agustin D. Martinez, Virginia Sandoval, Michelle Lucarelli-Beltran, Kathee Saito, Richard McKinley, Veronica Varela, Armand Montiel, and Olivia Rubio

Supervisor Antonovich's Magic Mountain Holiday Party



Members of the Alexis Quiza Foundation make a donation to the Children's Trust Fund. Supervisor Antonovich and DCFs manager Dominique Robinson (far right) received the check. The family of Alexis Quiza started the foundation to honor the memory of Alexis by carrying on her charitable works for children at-risk and in need



Supervisor Antonovich honoring ABC 7 Public Affairs Director Teresa Samaniego for her long term support of the Spark of Love Toy Drive



Supervisor Antonovich and Los Angeles County Fire Chief Daryl L. Osby distributing toys to the children



Volunteers from the DCFs Santa Clarita Office. (From L. to R.) Monica Maurer, Letisia Rodriguez, Lydia Zecharias, Paul V. Freedlund, Santa Claus, Michelle Perez and Minh Orr

Last December, Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich and ABC 7 hosted the 19th Holiday Christmas Party at Six Flags Magic Mountain. The Spark of Love Toy Drive made many dreams come true by providing an exciting, family-oriented and fun-filled experience for hundreds of foster families served by Los Angeles County. A section of the park reserved for our families was transformed into a "Winter Wonderland," complete with holiday decorations, ornaments, entertainment, face painting, a delicious lunch, and Christmas tree. Pictures with Santa was a popular feature with all eager to take a photo.

Supervisor Antonovich greeted the guests as they enjoyed the festivities. Members of the Alexis Quiza Foundation volunteered and generously donated \$1,000 to the DCFs Children's Trust Fund. DCFs staff, including Regional Administrator Paul Freedlund, made sure every child left with a smile, holiday gift and a stuffed animal of their choosing. Over 500 foster children attended the party with their caregivers and were given a full day's admission to the Six Flags Magic Mountain theme park. What a great way to kick-off the holiday season! 🎄

DCFS Student Information Tracking System a Quality Productivity Award Winner



DCFS managers receive award; (From L. to R.) Steve Sturm (Education and Mentoring), Tricia Denson (Finance and Administration), Cecilia Custodio (Business Information Systems), Quality Productivity Award Commissioner Rodney C. Gibson, Senior Deputy Director Cynthia McCoy-Miller, County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, County Supervisor Hilda L. Solis, Chief Executive Officer Sachi A. Hamai, and Jason Ly and Seyoun Yohannes (both from the DCFS Business Information Systems)

The DCFS Student Information Tracking System was a recipient of a 2015 Quality Productivity Award. The tracking system is a comprehensive web-based application that was built in-house to enable school-based social workers to efficiently retrieve and view student education information in real time and to allow the Department to share information with school districts. 🇺🇸

“999 FOR KIDS” Annual Holiday Celebration



DCFS Medical Case Management Services staff with the Sheriff and Mr. Browning. (From L. to R) Back row: Captain Roosevelt Johnson, Philip Browning, Jeff Gibbs, Patricia Valdivia-Flores (behind Jeff), Esperanza Gonzalez, Lenise Petri, Karen Bowman (DCFS Deaf Services), Suzette Guillen, Analecit Lopez, Sheriff Jim McDonnell. Front Row: Bill Thomas, Cynthia Counts, Rosella Yousef, Darlene Stevenson (DCFS Deaf Services), Anabel Rodriguez

On December 7th, Sheriff Jim McDonnell, DCFS Director Philip L. Browning and student volunteers from the Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising welcomed 950 abused and neglected children to their annual “999 for Kids” holiday celebration. “999” is the radio code for “deputy needs assistance.” The Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department and DCFS created the 999 for Kids Program 29 years ago to assist severely disabled and abused children. The children received toys from Santa, donated accessories and school supplies, and enjoyed a meal, train rides, inflatable jumpers and face painting. 🇺🇸

Over 160 Los Angeles County Foster Children's Adoptions Finalized at 16th Annual National Adoption Day



DCFS Adoption managers (from L. to R.) Debbie Reza, Tami Hill, Joe Prusak, Lylia Ramirez, Bill Thomas, Diane Mendoza, Carlos Castillo, Griselda Sifuentes, Mariana Sopera

On November 20th, 100 families celebrated with their newly adopted children at the Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court in Monterey Park. National Adoption Day was first celebrated in Los Angeles in 1998, under the leadership of Judge Michael Nash, the former Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court,

to help expedite adoptions. Since 1998, more than 34,000 adoptions have been finalized in Los Angeles County. DCFS Director Philip L. Browning stated: "Today is a special day for more than 160 children who now have a family to call their own for the rest of their lives. The support of a stable, loving family affords these youth a brighter, more secure future. In the past year, DCFS social workers have found adoptive homes for more than 1,400 youth."

In the last five years, more than 6,800 children exited foster care in Los Angeles County when their adoptions were finalized. Nearly 60% of the day's adoptions were for siblings including 16 groups of three or more siblings. More than 55% of DCFS' finalized adoptions are relative adoptions. Currently, there are nearly 500 children still waiting for an adoptive family. DCFS Post Adoption Services social workers assist families with adoption-related needs that may arise after an adoption finalizes. To become a foster or adoptive parent, please call 1-888-811-1121 or visit www.shareyourheartla.org.



Adoptive mother Esther Barrios with her son and Judge Pellman

A Call to Action



Jason and his mother Nishmeth De Jesus



Jason with DCFS Social Workers (from L. to R.) Trinh Huynh and Maria Marquez

Jason

Deserves a Fighting Chance

You Could be His Cure

Jason, a DCFS adoptee, is diagnosed with a life threatening blood disease. Jason needs a **bone marrow** match to survive and there is no biological family available to provide this. As his extended family, DCFS sponsored a donor drive on April 27, 2016. Stay tuned for a bone marrow drive near you.

A simple cheek swab can save his life.

DONORS MUST BE BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18 to 44
Don't delay, do it today - visit www.bethematch.org to schedule a cheek swab or have a swab kit mailed to you.

Dancin', Dunkin', and Lots of Smiles at DCFS Family Fun Day!

Here are some pictures from the 2015 Family Fun Day picnic held on November 7th at Whittier Narrows. 🍁



Sandra Zuniga, Elia Godinez and Blanca Ramirez



(From L. to R.) Dawna Yokoyama, Claudia Breda, Ronique Ross, Lisa Tyes and Michelle Aguilar



2015 Volleyball Champions: Santa Fe Springs office (from L. to R.) Back row: Joey Valtierra, Joshua Reyes, Alan Sanchez, Nicole Barrios, Ricky Rivera, and Raquel Arranda. Front Row: Anthony Rojas, Lisa Kanno and Jesse Moreno



Most Valuable Dunkee: Frank Ramos helped raise over \$500 for the Children's Trust Fund

SAVE THE DATE

This year's Family Fun Day is September 17, 2016

2016 Denim Day



For the last 17 years, Peace Over Violence has held their annual Denim Day on a Wednesday in April. Denim Day draws attention to the fact that rape and sexual assault remain a serious issue in our society, and injurious attitudes about rape and sexual assault allow these crimes to persist and victim/survivors to be re-victimized. Many in our society remain disturbingly uninformed about issues of assault and forcible rape.

The members of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors strongly support the efforts of Peace Over Violence. Therefore, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors proclaimed April 27, 2016, as Denim Day in Los Angeles County, and urged everyone to wear jeans and attend Denim Day observances in their area to help communicate the message that there is "no excuse and never an invitation to rape." 🍁

Wearing jeans for Denim Day is DCFS Director Philip Browning, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, Supervisor Kuehl's Children's Deputy Genie Chough and DCFS Senior Deputy Director Diane Iglesias

All for the Love of Kids



Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich and Lakers Coach Byron Scott



(From L. to R.) Lovette Panthier-Gerst, Keesee Gregory, Jackie Solomon, Kimberlee Bilbrew, Candice Brown, Byron Scott, Dominique Robinson, Ernieca Burnett, and Yvette Alexander



DCFS managers with Byron Scott. (from L. to. R) Leticia Torres-Ibarra (and her two daughters), Amara Suárez, Byron Scott, Patience Lyons, Angelica and Daniel Svedas

LA County Board Supervisor Michael Antonovich held yet another successful “All for the Love of Kids” fundraiser for the DCFS Children’s Trust Fund, which provides services that are not covered by government funding to LA County foster youth. Lakers Head Coach Byron Scott was honored for his contributions to needy children and families. American Idol finalist Jacob Lusk again lent his amazing vocal talents, while KTLA anchor Chris Schaubel returned as the event host. Former foster youth Victor Cantay and Yennifer Padilla spoke from their hearts about their experiences as foster youth and the help they received from DCFS. The highlight of the evening was the auctioned basketball signed by Byron Scott, Julius Randall and Jordan Clarkson of the Lakers. After an intense bidding war, LA County Fire Department Chief Daryl Osby had the top bid and went home with the ball! All proceeds raised help to enhance the lives of DCFS foster youth. 🍷

Special Visitors at the Hotline!



(From L. to R.) Ben Johnson, DCFS Social Worker James Ayala, Ryan Woosley, Callie Freitag, Lourdes Morales and Ginni Bella

Last November, DCFS hosted five analysts from the Sacramento Legislative Analyst’s Office who were eager to learn about the structure and daily operations of our Department. These analysts provide fiscal and policy advice, which includes recommendations for legislative action that impacts child welfare, to the California legislature. The visitors toured the Child Protection Hotline and heard presentations on our Hotline and Emergency Response Command Post operations, our regional Emergency Response and Continuing Services programs, the Approved Relative Caregiver Program, and the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. The group also visited the DCFS Welcome Centers and learned about the challenges DCFS has finding foster placements for some children and youth (particularly infants, sibling sets and older youth). Each analyst participated in a ride-along and shadowed a social worker during their child abuse investigations. Managing Principal Analyst Ginni Bella said, “We learned more in a day with you than we could have ever imagined. It is not often that we get a few uninterrupted hours with people as intimately familiar with the programs we cover as you all are, and when we do it provides us with a renewed sense of motivation for our work. Sacramento can sometimes feel very distant, and it is visits with you that truly help us gain a better understanding of the programs in our assignment areas.” 🍷

The Social (Worker) Network



(From L. to R.) Fred Stevens, Leonard Olive (Adult Honoree) Celestine Olive (Adult Honoree) Eric Washington (Youth Honoree) DCFS Manager Otho Day, Social Worker Sharon Morris, DCFS Director Philip Browning, Career Development Intern Yolanda Lopez

On April 4th, at the Annual Volunteer of the Year Awards Luncheon, Eric Washington was honored as the DCFS Youth Volunteer of the Year for his work as a peer mentor to many Teen Club participants. Celestine and Leonard Olive were honored as the DCFS Adult Volunteers of the Year for their work with Five Acres youth since January 2014. They are all excellent role models

and are adept at identifying our youth's strengths and encouraging them to pursue their dreams. 🌟

On October 22, 2015, the Torrance Parents in Partnership Team was honored with the “Outstanding Community Partner” award at the 25th Options for Recovery Anniversary Celebration. The Parent Partners were recognized for their excellent work in partnering with Options staff, particularly in linking DCFS case-involved mothers in the South Bay to drug addiction recovery and domestic violence survivor programs. 🌟



Torrance Parents in Partnership team (from L. to R.) Jennifer Olague, Derrick Perez-Johnson, Amber Choate, Beck Senter (Options for Recovery), Rachel Chavez



At the 100,000 Opportunities Initiative’s fair held last February at the LA Convention Center, DCFS transition coordinator Tiffany Griffin and Youth Development Services’ supervising social-worker Greg Breuer (both pictured) provided job information to participating youth. Also representing DCFS were Jacqueline Bowen, Wendy Luke and Erika Pollard. Thousands of youths, between the ages of 16 and 24, from all over LA County came downtown with hopes of finding a job. The County and the City

of Los Angeles and 30 businesses including Starbucks, Chipotle, Target, and TOMS conducted interviews and hired youth on the spot. This Opportunity Fair allowed job seekers to connect with industry professionals and improve résumé writing and interviewing skills. The event also gave youth an opportunity to speak with job mentors, meet with financial coaches, take part in job training workshops and explore public sector opportunities for careers within the justice system. 🌟

Last December, three adventurous West LA staffers Nancy Tran, Jaqueline Peraza and Regional Administrator Michael Rauso participated in the 2015 Spartan Race Sprint. The race, held in Castaic Lake State Recreation Area, is 100% off-road in extremely steep terrain, with lots of sharp turns and single-track sections. There was fire, mud, water, barbed wire, and “occasionally, hell on earth.” Michael Rauso described the event as a total endurance race that features things that make you ask yourself “why did I pay money to do this?” Michael sees the race as a great fund raising/team building opportunity and hopes to have a lot more staffers testing their mettle at future races. 🌟





Over 800 children and their families enjoyed a day of holiday giving at the Compton Office as they were greeted by local firemen and Cub Scouts. The children were treated to lunch and cotton candy while listening to Christmas music. There were five jumpers and craft tables. Children took photos with Santa and posed with an assortment of silly props. The highlight of the party was the raffling of 16 bicycles and four skateboards. The children and families left with smiles from ear to ear, carrying their Christmas gifts, crafts and memories of a special day. 🎄

Compton social worker Sharonda Wade contacted 120 foster homes for a 16-year-old probation youth with an arrest warrant. She located an emergency 30-day shelter for him despite his problematic history. Sharonda convinced Probation not to place the youth in Juvenile Hall, seeing promise where others only saw difficulty. After his first week at the shelter, the youth was selected student of the week and, after a month, he was moved to a less restrictive group home due to his good behavior. He continues to make progress. As Sharonda says, “just because someone has a bad beginning doesn't mean they're destined to fail if given an opportunity.” Good work, Sharonda! 🎄



Sharonda Wade



(From L. to R.) Marianela Inchausti, Axa Cazzaly, Yvette Alexander, Ramona Hollman, Elbis Severo, Sara Mena, Tracy Wong, Gail Lawson, Lidia Escobar

The annual ICAN holiday party, in partnership with the El Monte office, treated over 1,000 children and their families to a day of holiday cheer. Each child received a tote bag that included DVDs of their favorite Disney cartoons, clothing items, and books. Santa himself made a grand entrance on a local fire truck and made his way to the toy cottage where the happy children received their Christmas gifts and a picture with Santa. A magician and other entertainers kept the crowd engaged while eating lunch, popcorn, and snow cones. The party ended with the raffling of 75 tricycles. 🎄

On January 9, 2016, DCFS staff participated in the 2016 Inaugural Foster the Future 5K Run in Van Nuys. Ryan Smith, race organizer and adoptive father, along with his adopted son Erzhan, wanted to raise funds and awareness for aged-out foster youth. They partnered with Aztlan Athletics Foundation which regularly stages local running events in Southern California to benefit worthy causes and promote well-being. Proceeds from this event benefitted Journey House located in Pasadena. Jessica Ambroz, Wendy Luke, and Michael Darajorn were just a few of the many DCFS race finishers. DCFS Youth Development Services were on hand to lend their support. To learn about upcoming races where DCFS runners can designate proceeds to benefit DCFS, visit www.aztlanathletics.org. 🎄



(From L. to R.) DCFS Staff Michael Darajorn, Erika Pollard, Cameron Williamson-Martin, Wendy Luke, Rihana Acklin, Luvia Munoz

DCFS Hague Unit on the Move



Mexican Officials (in uniform) with (from L. to R.) Department of Justice Agent Val Jimenez and DCFS Social Workers Michelle Lucarelli-Beltran, Chanttel Briseño and Elvia del Cid. (Photo taken in Coacalco de Berriozábal, México)

A simple ask from DCFS Regional Administrator Charles Tadlock to Deputy Director Roberta Medina, “Do we have any staff to attend Hague hearings?,” led to the creation of the DCFS Hague Unit in 2014. The unit was created to recover internationally abducted children utilizing the Hague Convention, a multilateral treaty with three primary objectives:

1. To secure the prompt return of a wrongfully removed or retained child to his or her country of habitual residence;
2. To ensure that rights of custody and access in one signatory country are respected in other signatory countries; and
3. To deter future international abductions.

The Hague Unit, trained in the nuances of Hague hearings, includes bilingual social workers Chanttel Briseño, Elvia del Cid, Nancy Delgado and supervisors Michelle Lucarelli-Beltran, Angelica Varela-Campos, Cynthia Van Dam, and Cecilia Saco. These volunteers travel to foreign countries accompanied by a Department of Justice law enforcement officer who assists with travel, safety issues, and attends hearings. Since its inception, nine hearings have been held, six of which required a Hague Unit social worker to appear in a foreign court, each leading to a resolution of an abduction case. Through these hearings two children recovered. There are currently nine international child abduction cases pending, primarily in Mexico. At a moment’s notice, these volunteers are prepared to travel to any foreign country to attend Hague hearings, recover children, and safely bring them home. 🇺🇸

Core Practice Model



Core Practice Model Communications Campaign Invites Staff to “Get to the Core!”

“Get to the Core!” is the theme of a multi-faceted communications campaign unveiled on April 28th to support the countywide implementation of the Core Practice Model (CPM). The unveiling took place at the daylong Leadership Organization Group in Montebello, with over 400 people in attendance, including DCFS Director Philip Browning and Department of Mental Health (DMH) Acting Director Robin Kay.

The Get to the Core campaign features a variety of communications tools to both inform and inspire staff about the CPM. The tools include a dedicated website; a colorful 34-page handbook; a poster series featuring DCFS and DMH staff, service providers and community partners; instructional presentation videos featuring two DCFS coach developers; and two 10-minute testimonial videos chronicling families who successfully reunified with their children thanks to the CPM and the work of DCFS staff. Perhaps the most popular item was the CPM “Magic Cube,” a cube shaped multi-paneled desktop resource designed to be informative as well as fun to play with.

County staffers are intended to be the public face of the Get to the Core campaign. Attendees at the DCFS Leadership Organization Group conference had an opportunity to be involved by recording their own “CPM Insights” – short videos which will be featured on a dedicated website.

Campaign materials are expected to be delivered to regional offices in May and June, with additional components planned for a future phase. DCFS is moving forward with the implementation of CPM. We are starting with two CPM “immersion” offices, in Compton and Van Nuys, and we have about 700 staff members certified as Child and Family Team Facilitators (child and family teams are a key component of CPM), CPM coaches and coach developers. This campaign will assist us in maintaining staff enthusiasm about CPM and with implementation.

For more information about the CPM, visit www.GetToTheCore.org. 🍷

Congratulations Kayon!!



(From L. to R.) Social Worker Alisha Von Lewis, Kayon Brantley and Independent Living Coordinator Gale Parker-Tate

On Sunday, May 1, 2016, DCFS Youth Development Services Independent Living Program coordinator Gale Parker-Tate and social worker Alisha Von Lewis had the honor of attending an extraordinary young man’s graduation from the University of California at Berkeley. Kayon Brantley, a former foster youth, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Molecular & Cell Biology and plans to become a medical doctor. Kayon was the Master of Ceremonies at Berkeley’s Guardian Scholars’ graduation ceremony (known as the Berkeley Hope Scholars, a group focused on the success of former foster youth). He did a great job! Kayon reached out to Ms. Parker-Tate and Ms. Von Lewis and asked if they would attend the graduation ceremony when his great aunt and caregiver sadly passed away shortly before his finals. Alisha and Gale were happy to travel to Berkeley to support Kayon and celebrate with him. 🍷

Continuum of Care Reform Update: Resource Family Approval

RFA in LA



Last year, Assembly Bill 403, known as the Continuum of Care Reform became California law. The Continuum of Care Reform will implement a number of changes intended to promote a foster youth's permanency and reduce the use of congregate care (e.g., group home foster care). One such change is the Resource Family Approval (RFA) program, a unified, family-friendly and

child-centered approach for approving relative, foster, and adoptive caregivers. RFA is a state mandated program that is designed to place children with families that can provide lifelong connections by determining permanency approval upfront. The RFA program will be implemented in all California counties by January 1, 2017.

What is the Resource Family Approval Process?

- One application, one background check, one comprehensive assessment (eliminates duplication of the current separate applications, approval processes and assessments for foster care, relative care and adoption);
- Provides pre-approval and post-approval training for all families; and
- Includes procedures for the emergency placement of a child with a relative or non-related extended family members prior to resource family approval.

Support for Resource Families

In January and March 2016, DCFS was awarded funding by the State of California to enhance efforts to Recruit, Retain, and Support all caregivers. The following strategies are currently underway:

Emergency Placement Stipend - As of April 1, 2016, a one-time payment of \$400 is given to relative caregivers and non-related extended family members when a child is placed in their home with short notice. Immediately following placement, the relative will receive a check in the mail within 10 business days.

Tangible Supports - DCFS has pre-purchased items frequently needed to support the care of small children, e.g. cribs, diapers, formula, strollers, etc. to be provided to caregivers that do not have immediate access to needed basic supplies. These tangible supports are available at DCFS Compton, Palmdale, and Kinship Center offices and will soon be available countywide. 🍷

Los Angeles County's Annual Secretarial Seminar

The Los Angeles County Secretarial Council provides opportunities for networking and information sharing among County secretaries. At this year's "Spring Into Action," the Council's Annual Seminar, DCFS was well-represented! 🍷



*(From Left to Right) Back row: Julie Cervantes, Stephanie Sanchez, Vernita Cox, Tracee Cochran
Front row: Veronica Martinez, Inez Holmes, Faye Canada, Beverly Vansen, Kim Bilbrew, Ana Fonseca, Diane Enriquez,
Maria Antuñez, Talin Zargarian, Michelle Forniss, Regina De La Peña*

2016 Outstanding Nurse of the Year



Nurse Jennifer Smith (center) with Director Browning, her parents Mrs. & Mr. Smith, DCFS Medical Director Dr. Charles Sophy and DCFS Nurse Manager Maria Lieras

and Lancaster Offices. Jennifer advocates on behalf of children to ensure that their health care needs are met and that they receive the appropriate level of care. Using critical thinking skills and assisting families in need is what gives Jennifer the greatest joy and satisfaction. 🍷

Congratulations to DCFS Public Health Nurse Jennifer Smith, recognized in May as the DCFS 2016 Outstanding Nurse of the Year by the Board of Supervisors. Jennifer received her bachelor's degree in Neuroscience in 2007 from USC and a master's degree in Nursing in 2012 from Charles Drew University. She started working for DCFS in July 2014 and has worked in both the DCFS Palmdale

The Transitional Shelter Care Program



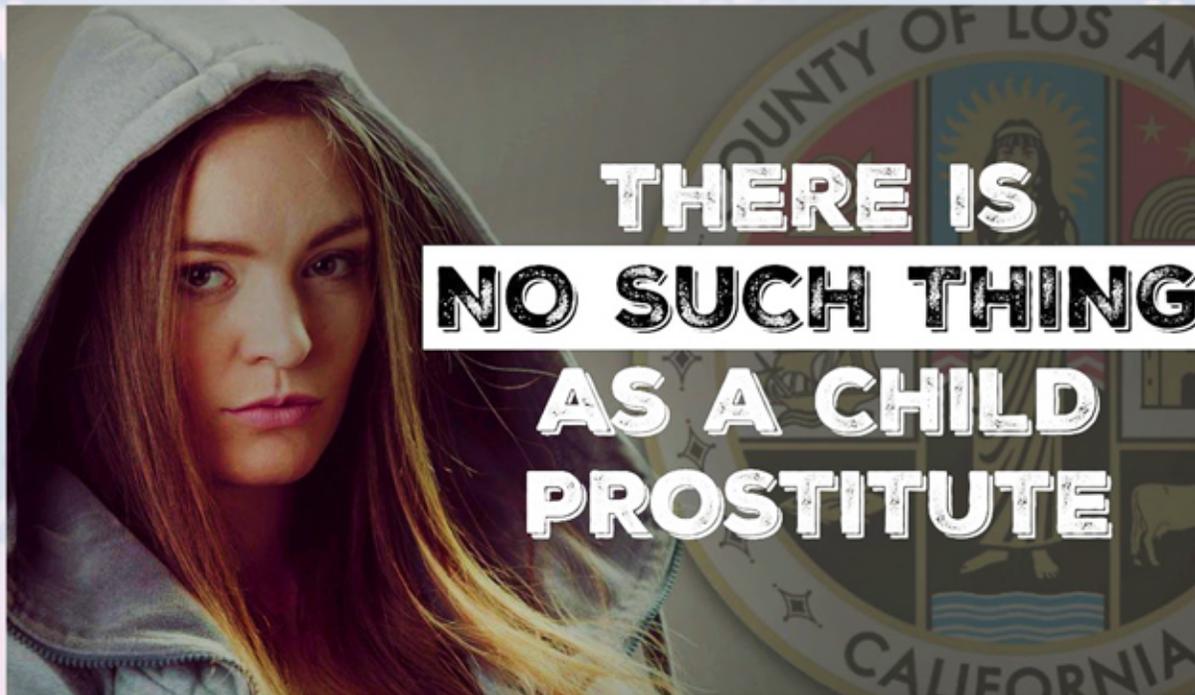
The Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services, in partnership with the Department of Health Services and Mental Health, operated the Children and Youth's Welcome Centers since 2012 and 2014, respectively, on the LAC+USC Medical Center campus, serving children and youth needing a place to wait until a foster home was secured. The Welcome Centers operated as 23-hour shelters, and despite best placement search efforts, a percentage of children remained at the Welcome Centers beyond the 23 hours. Hence, the State of California mandated that children and youth await placement in a facility licensed for overnight stays. The Department sought existing group home providers to take on this task, and ultimately contracted four agencies to become Transitional Shelter Care facilities.

The contracted agencies are Hathaway-Sycamores (pictured), Five Acres, David & Margaret, and Junior Blind of America. After working on operational standards and getting their premises in top condition, these four agencies were granted 72-hour transitional shelter care licenses by the California Community Care Licensing Division in March 2016. Given their expertise of running residential facilities, these agencies are now providing excellent care and supervision to our children and youth. The Department has also co-located DCFS staffers within these shelters to act as liaisons between the agencies and DCFS.

The shelters are designed to take in children and youth after regular business hours, weekends and holidays. The shelters also serve DCFS regional offices that need a home for children or youth when all efforts to find other foster homes during regular business hours have been exhausted. There is a 68 bed capacity among all four shelters and they have served approximately 15 children/youth per night since their March openings.

Children and youth entering these shelters still undergo a medical and mental health screening at the LAC+USC Medical Center, which has proven to be a best practice, to minimize any medical risk to children in congregate care and also to address some of their mental health needs. During a child's/youth's shelter stay, the DCFS Accelerated Placement Team and regional office staff work diligently to secure foster homes, including relative homes. 🍷

Los Angeles County Law Enforcement First Responder Protocol For Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC)



Los Angeles County has been identified as a major hub for the commercial sexual exploitation of children. In response, Los Angeles County has committed time, energy and resources to expose this brutal industry and in August 2014 the Los Angeles County Law Enforcement First Responder Protocol (Protocol) for Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) was implemented. The Protocol outlines a coordinated response to serve CSEC from identification through the first 72 hours of contact. The Protocol, founded on the tenets of engagement, teaming, assessing, planning, and tracking, created a system in which law enforcement officers can identify victims of sexual exploitation and work collaboratively with County agencies and community-based organizations to avoid their arrest, keep them safe and provide them with the services they need to escape exploitation; identifying and engaging youth at this first point of contact will help keep victims of extreme sexual abuse from being criminalized. The goal of the Protocol is to identify and respond to CSEC expeditiously using a victim-centered, strengths-based approach. It focuses on building relationships with youth from the outset, understanding the child is in her/his stage of exploitation, and avoiding arrest of the youth.

The Protocol created a specific CSEC expedited response for calls to the DCFS Child Protection Hotline from law enforcement agencies. The DCFS Multiagency Response Team (MART) social workers conduct the investigation when CSEC cases are referred to the DCFS hotline from the pilot area. MART social workers are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and respond to the scene within 90 minutes. Trained in the dynamics of CSEC and a desire to serve this high-risk population, the dedicated MART staff is responsible for leading multidisciplinary team meetings to determine placement, develop an initial safety plan, and schedule medical/mental health evaluation. If the child has an open DCFS case, MART works closely with the child's primary social worker to address the child's needs.

The Protocol was successfully piloted in Long Beach and Compton, areas of the county with disproportionately high rates of arrest of children and young adults for prostitution and related offenses. Initially working with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Century and Compton stations, as well as with the Long Beach Police Department, the Protocol has expanded to include the Sheriff's Transit Bureau-LA Basin, and the Los Angeles Police Department 77th and Southeast stations. Building on its success, the Protocol will be rolled out countywide throughout 2016 with full countywide implementation targeted for completion in 2017.

Success of the Protocol is attributed to the hard work of DCFS, its partners and the resilience of CSEC survivors. 🌸

Director's Employee Recognition Award Winners For Outstanding Service



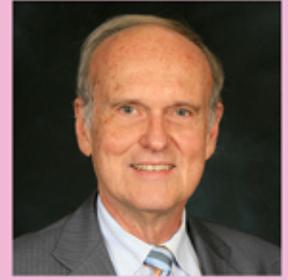
Denise Sawyers
Eligibility Worker II
Vermont Corridor



Janette Vengco-Dalan
Children's Social Worker III
Covina Annex



Luz Moran
Children Services Administrator II
El Monte



Paul Freedlund
Regional Administrator
West San Fernando Valley



Ariel Rivera
Children's Social Worker
Pasadena



Davis Yu
Intermediate Typist Clerk
Pomona



Rosario Apolinario
Accountant II
Headquarters



Sheila Johnson
Intermediate Typist Clerk
Vermont Corridor



Personnel Processing & Examinations and Recruitment

(From L. to R.) Back row: Marquis Toney, Juan Jimenez, Jason Taw. Middle row: José Flores, Fanita Morris, Carmen Reyes, Gladys Dickson, Violet Bizzell, Denise Flores, Donna Culpepper, Jonathan Ye, John Ngai. Front row: Loretha Smith, Yeran Badoyan, Tatevik Magakyan, Eileen Shih, Jonathan Gorospe, Chennae James, Elizabeth Badalian, Rachel Matthews, Camille Harris, Shakeh Avedian, Loan Trinh, Perlito Marcilla, Mashall Tang
Headquarters



Antelope Valley Parents in Partnership

(From L. to R.) Dennis Johnson, Cinthya Rosales, Melanie Maples, Precilla Diaz, Emilie Wagar, Monica Matthews, Mark Birdsong
Antelope Valley

DCFS Service Anniversaries and Retirements



DCFS Employee's Anniversaries of County Service (May thru November 2015)

25 Years: Alejandro C. Baca, Alvaro B. Zarate, Annette H. Hwangbo, Anthony C. Ruiz, Arena L. Cole, Barbara A. Tunstall, Bertha A. Santiago, Carlos E. Castillo, Celina Pacheco, Charlotte Wideman, Charlotte Y. Moore, Cheryl Walden, Christian I. Unaka, Craig Nishoka, Craig Shigenaga, Cynthia Conner-Anderson, Deirdre J. Kuper, Delores Robinson, Detris M. Bush, Donna M. Buckley-Schwessinger, Dorothy J. Carter-Clayton, Edward M. Webb, Elaine D. Clarke, Esther Pulido, Evelyn B. Berrios, Fanita L. Morris, Florida Valentin, Franklin M. Clark, Fawnda M. Sandoval, Gary L. Kirkland, Gina M. Segal, Grace Y S Kim, Gregg D. Fritchle, Guadalupe Jauregui, Harold L. Winter, Harvey D. Hale Jr., Hazel D. Long, Hui-Li Wang, Irina Karpachinski, Izolda Sigal-Liberman, Jacqueline C. Trimble, Jacqueline Madrigal, Jacquelyn London, James A. Pounds, Jay E. Townsend, Joan E. Parker, Joaquin Miramontes, Jocelyn Patterson, John G. Sylvester, Jonathan Q. Gorospe, Jorge Ortiz Jr., Jorgina M. Mayoral, Joseph J. Prusak, Karen Bowman, Ketly M. Brunache-Demus, Korliss P. Robinson, Lisa K. Elliott, Lisa-Marie Kaye, Lourdes S. Valderrama, Luis H. Arevalo, Lynette M. Morgan-Nichols, Manuel Lizarraburu, Margaret M. Jung-Boecherer, Maria C. Trevino, Maria G. Rojas, Marian L. Grider, Marie Fischer, Mark Alvarado, Martha V. Wilson, Mary Alvin-Nichols, Mary Stallworth, Michael S. Simson, Michele E. Nakamura, Monica S. Biernat, Myrna R. De La Cruz, Nancy A. Chess, Nancy E. Urquilla, Omnaya R. Zaklama, Pamela H. Ha, Pernell Outley, Ramona Lee, Randolph M. Garcia, Regina R. Silva, Reneta L. Baptist, Richard M. Koda, Roberta M. Thomas, Robin B. Hill, Ronald L. Poprosky, Ronald T. Burke, Ronda R. Jacobs, Rose Mary Rincon, Rosemarie Comepan, Ruena Borja, Sabrina L. Buck, Sandra Rico, Sharon S. Helms-Elliseau, Shineen Hudson-Williams, Sonia V. Contreras, Sophia L. Prado, Stephen W. Morhaime, Suzanne A. Hodge, Sydney A. Tucker, Theresa Marie Telles Rogers, Timothy E. Reeffer, Toi P. Murray-Stephenson, Trinidad B. Gavidia, Warren M. Battle, William E. Burnes, Yolanda Kenon.

30 Years: Aida Garcia, Amelia R. Medrano, Angie Rivera, Arthur Segura, Barbara Dallis, Bedrae Blocker-Davis, Beverly D. Warren, Blanca E. Ramirez, Camelia M. Mata, Carl K. Maruyama, Carmen Ochoa, Carol J. Taylor-Jones, Cecilia M. Saco, David L. Boydston, Delores R. Sampson, Edwin Gonzalez, Edwina F. Lewis, Elaine Valenzuela, Elsy Ceballos, Eric A. Faiz, Frances L. Lewis, Frances Young, Frank C. Burcelis, Gary Wayne, Geraldine Henry-Smith, Grissell Jover, Helen M. Maxwell, Helen Williams, Hoa N. Phan, Inez M. Holmes, Janice E. Oglesby, Jennifer Lu, Jesus Estrada Jr., Jossie Parzons, June E. Autrey, June Jackson, Karen Lenier, Kim A. Lovetro, Laverne Bunton, Lisa Woods, Louisa Chan, Manuel Perez, Maria E. Antunez, Maria S. Reza, Maria V. Herdsman, Marilynn A. Spalinger, Maureen Small, May Yu, Michael Watrobski, Migdalia R. Roberts, Monica J. Maurer, My Lu, Natalie F. Johnson, Patricia Rivera, Paula R. Gamboa, Rachel H. Brock, Rhonda R. Washington, Richard L. McKinley, Roberta A. Hill, Roberta R. Medina, Ronald Oroz, Salwa Abouelnasr, Sandra Spikes, Sarah A. Padilla, Silvia Lozano, Sin S. Choi, Soledad Cardenas, Stephanie Sanchez-Salazar, Susana J. Andongo, Sylvia Guerra, Taft Robinson, Thomas E. Fraser, Tina M. Urbina, Valencia K. Parker, Venus V. Crittenden, Vicki S. Ramirez, Virginia Kyle.

35 Years: Andrette D. Whitmore, Angela Cole, Beverly J. Williams, Constance C. Lewis, Cynthia A. McCoy-Miller, Cynthia Meza, Debbie Ibay, Donna M. Hill, Evelyn J. Horton, Evelyn Sanchez, Gloria Villalobos, Lina Morales-Martinez, Linda L. Webb, Maria C. Lieras, Pamela F. Donnelson, Sandra Mack, Sharon D. Guy-Ukattah, Sharon H. Ward, Vera Gray, Veronica R. Martinez, Vicki Moore, Ylia V. De Luna.

40 Years: Henry E. Williams Sr., Ricky C. Brewer.

45 Years: Barbara S. Luft.

50 Years: Charles L. Tadlock.

Congratulations to Recent DCFS Retirees (Retirees from Oct. 2015 to Feb. 2016)

Alla Kalyuzhny, Alyce L. Schindler, Brenda Du Brey, Celia M. Mourlot, Chung J. Kim, Connie Amstone, Daniel O. Okeke, Deborah Cotton Thomas, Deborah R. Guiloff, Dennis Gregory, Dick SantaCruz, Drew A. Davis, Edmund A. Giedraitis, Erlinda V. Dyer, Felix O. Nwosu, Frederick Ross, Glynndean Suggs, Gregory C. Benton, Jenifer L. Armstrong, John W. Mossman, Jose Lujan, Joyce K. Roberts, Juliet Fuller, Linda D. Patterson, Lorinda J. Le Blanc, Luvirda F. Carter, Lynda J. Hargrave, Manuel Lizarraburu, Maria M. Borunda, Mark A. Miller, Martha C. Salinas, Martha E. Gomez, Martha T. Martinez, Mary J. Glass, Maryanne Duffy, Marylou D. Velasquez, Michael L. Hale, Patricia A. Candy, Raymond A. Harris, Rebecca Vasquez, Sandra J. Green, Shirley D. Starr, Taira Suzuki, Terri A. Doyle, Toshio Ozawa, Vickie L. Garcia.

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors

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First District

Mark Ridley-Thomas
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Sheila Kuehl
Third District

Don Knabe
Fourth District

Michael D. Antonovich
Fifth District



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Philip L. Browning

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