

# Family Preservation

The Family Preservation Program [FPP] is a strength-based, collaborative program aimed at helping families to identify and build upon existing strengths; resolve problems causing child safety concerns; advocate for their children at school and in other public settings; and expand, or establish for the first time, the family's connection to resources and supports in the local community. One of the primary goals of the FPP is increased self sufficiency within the family and a reduced reliance upon public agency intervention.

When DCFS and the family come to the table at the initial Multi-Disciplinary Case Planning Committee [MCPC] meeting to develop the MCPC case plan, representatives from community service agencies are also present. The Family Preservation Program's MCPC meetings serve as a continuation of the strength-based process initiated at the Team Decision Making meeting held during the early stages of DCFS intervention. Together, a new vision is created with and for the family during the MCPC meeting; goals are set and the foundation for the relationship between the family and this multi-dimensional support team is laid.

The FPP is, for many DCFS families, an essential component of successful reunification of children with their families. The program may be initiated several months prior to children returning home as a way of smoothing the transition, putting needed supports in place, and helping the family to prepare for their reunion. FPP support services are offered from 6 months to 12 months, or more, after the children are reunified, depending upon the family's individual needs.

The FPP offers a vast array of services, including, but not limited to:

- In-Home Outreach Counseling and case management;
- Parent Training;
- Counseling;
- Teaching and Demonstrating Homemaking to assist families in managing a household and creating a financial budget;
- Child Focused Activities, offered to children while their caregivers are participating in a support service, e.g., counseling;
- Substitute Adult Role Modeling, in which a mentor is paired with a child or youth, to support their social, educational and recreational dreams;
- and Transportation of the family to and from their service activities.

The FPP also offers Auxiliary Funds for the purchase of procured items, such as a new refrigerator, stove, beds, dinette set and other household items; as well as payment of first and last months rent and security deposit for families moving their residence. Another essential feature of the FPP is Linkages services. Linkages is a collaboration between DCFS and the Department of Public Social Services to ensure that families in need receive services such as CALWORKS, Food Stamps and other support services not provided by FPP, including legal services, child care and job training.

The Family Preservation Program also maintains valuable relationships with other county departments, including the Department of Mental Health for psychiatric and psychological assessment and treatment of FPP families, the Department of Public Health's Community Assessment Service Centers [CASCs] for assessment and treatment of adults with substance abuse disorders, and the Housing Authority of the County of Los Angeles which assists FPP families with housing needs by providing Section 8 housing vouchers.

In short, it really does take a village to raise a child! The FPP helps to ensure that families have access to resources, both internal and external, that will keep their children safe and their families strong. During this Family Reunification Week celebration, we enthusiastically support and commend all of the children, families, public and private agencies, and community partners for their efforts --- and the sweet fruits of those efforts, which are safe, healthy, educated children residing with permanent families.

For more information about the Family Preservation Program, please visit:

<http://lakids.dcfs.lacounty.gov>