



## ***We've Been Where You Are!***

Coming into contact with the Department of Children & Family Services can be a traumatic experience for any family. Losing custody of a child is devastating. Parents who have first-hand knowledge of this experience know how overwhelming and stressful it is for newly involved families to fully understand their rights and responsibilities. The Parent Partners are a committed group of parent advocates who have successfully navigated the system and now work in partnership with DCFS to provide parents with information, empowerment, and hope. We provide support and mentoring to parents who have recently lost custody of their children as well as parents whose children are in the foster care system without permanency. We assist parents and families by providing:

- ***Lobby and Community Outreach*** – Parent partners engage parents in the DCFS regional office lobby and at community sites. The goals are to provide families with referrals and resources, to encourage parents to make full use of DCFS and community partner supports, and to refer parents to the Parent Orientation.
- ***Warm Line*** – Parent partners staff a voicemail information line at the regional office. The goal is to provide families with a phone line through which they can request support and information from the parent partners.
- ***Parent Orientations*** – Parent partners and DCFS staff members co-facilitate a workshop in which parents are provided with information regarding child abuse and neglect, and strategies for success. The goals are increased parental awareness and empowerment, leading to better outcomes for families.
- ***Parent Support Groups*** – Parent partners facilitate support groups for parents who have children currently living under DCFS' supervision, in-home or out-of-home. The goal is to provide parents with a supportive process with parents who understand the tasks of reunification and parenting, and have leadership and advocacy experience.
- ***TDM Support*** – Parent partners participate in Team Decision Making meetings, with the parent(s)' permission, as an advocate for the parent. The goal is to assist parents in communicating their family's strengths and concerns.

Parent Partners are trained in the areas of parents' rights and responsibilities, grief & loss, communication, cultural awareness, child abuse reporting, and family violence. We are dedicated to the parents in the communities we serve.

### ***We Get Results!***

Recent studies suggest that parents who participate in our 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 our 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 voices of the parent partners, and their ability to convey courage and hope.

### ***We Get Involved!***

Parent Partners have been called to share their voice, concerns, and knowledge for various DCFS operated focus groups, senior management committees, panels, and conferences. We have participated in the Statewide Self Assessment, the Strategic Planning Redesign, and the Juvenile Dependency Court Focus Groups. We actively participate in the Department's efforts to eliminate racial disparity and disproportionality, to reduce timelines to permanency for children in foster care, and to improve child welfare practice. We promote partnerships between the community and DCFS to improve the lives of parents and families.

### ***We Can Help!***

If you or someone you know is a parent with an open DCFS case, we are here to help. Parent Partners are available to provide you with skilled mentorship and vital information. ***Contact us at one of the numbers below.*** Also, ***parent partners are located in the lobbies of the offices listed below*** to provide support and information. At your request we will support parents during TDM meetings (availability may vary).

#### DCFS Offices with the PIP Program

Belvedere  
Compton  
El Monte  
Pomona

Lancaster  
Palmdale  
Metro North  
Santa Clarita  
South County