

## **DCFS Pasadena - Visitation Centers**

Supported by research, best practice standards and legal statutes, visitation serves as the most essential service element for families towards achieving the outcomes of safety, permanence and well-being. More specifically, visitation is the most critical factor in ensuring and supporting safe and timely reunification for children and their birth families as the primary permanency option. Its central and fundamental place amid the array of services and supports to at-risk families cannot be understated.

As such, the Department of Children and Family Services has embarked upon a journey to improve visitation for families. One idea was to move visitation from the office environment to other locations in the community; thus the concept of Visitation Centers was developed.

The DCFS Pasadena Office has been working with various community partners and faith-based organizations to develop a network of Visitation Centers for the children and families that receive DCFS services within its catchment area. This effort includes finding partners who have a facility for a visitation, volunteers to be monitors, or those who can offer both services. It also includes training provided by the DCFS Pasadena Office.

To date, the Pasadena Office has been able to develop the following Visitation Centers/Services:

A partnership has been developed with the Eagle Rock Christian Assembly Church, which has provided both monitors and a facility. Five Acres, located in Altadena, has provided a facility where social workers and other service providers can monitor visits for families. The Abundant Harvest Church has provided several monitors for visitation to assist with the Department's efforts to reduce the number of African-American youth entering foster care. Additionally, the Pasadena DCFS Office is currently working with two other faith-based partners in an effort to develop an additional Visitation Center and add to the pool of available monitors.

Visitation is a key factor in reunifying families. Through the efforts of local community partners, faith-based organizations and the DCFS Pasadena Office, it is our hope that the ongoing development of Visitation Centers and training of potential monitors will continue to have a significant impact on the children and families of our community.