

Los Angeles County Family First Prevention Services Act



Los Angeles County
Department of Children
and Family Services

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
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PROBATION
Building safer communities through positive change.

LA County Family First Learning Site Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What is the purpose of LA County's learning site?

California submitted its [Five-Year State Prevention Plan](#) for the Family First Prevention Services Act (Part I) to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in August 2021. While we wait for approval of the Plan, Los Angeles County DCFS and Probation are already beginning to prepare for the successful implementation of Family First prevention services by launching a learning site. This learning site will initially focus on Motivational Interviewing, which California included in its Prevention Plan as a cross-cutting intervention (for substance abuse, mental health and parenting skills interventions) to improve engagement with families.

The initial goal of this learning site will be to use the data collected and lessons learned from a small-scale implementation of Motivational Interviewing among some families known to DCFS and Probation in order to improve processes and practice and ready LA County for full implementation of Family First prevention services.

More information on California's Prevention Plan is available at the CDSS' Family First website: <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/ffpsa>

What is Motivational Interviewing?

Designed for adolescents and adults, Motivational Interviewing (MI) is an engagement strategy that promotes behavioral change by identifying ambivalence and increasing motivation to change. MI can be implemented as part of casework practice and integrated within other service models. MI is adaptable across different cultures, ethnicities and languages, and has been successfully delivered in a wide variety of locations and settings.

Where will the learning site take place?

The learning site will take place in three DCFS regional offices located in Los Angeles County Service Planning Area (SPA) 2: Van Nuys, Santa Clarita and West San Fernando Valley. Within SPA 2, Probation's Van Nuys Area Office at the Zev Yaroslavsky Family Support Center will be a learning site partner. DCFS and Probation are co-located at the Zev Yaroslavsky Family Support Center.

Who will be involved in the learning site?

DCFS and Probation caseworkers located at the SPA 2 offices will receive MI training and certification through the Motivational Interviewing Network of Trainers (MINT). Once certified, they will use MI during casework visits with families who have Family Maintenance or Voluntary Family Maintenance cases, as well as expectant and parenting youth in foster care, to increase engagement with these youth and families.

How will community-based organizations be involved in this learning site?

Community providers, whose clients include expectant and parenting youth in foster care and families with Family Maintenance or Voluntary Family Maintenance cases, will have the opportunity to provide feedback on how the implementation of MI at the learning site has impacted the level of youth and family engagement in other prevention services provided.

What is the timeline for the learning site?

Training for staff in the three selected offices will begin in late October 2021. After training is completed, it is anticipated that MI will begin with selected youth and families. DCFS and Probation will add other evidence-based prevention services included in California's Prevention Plan, as well as community-based providers, in future phases of the learning site. Updates on the progress of the learning site will be provided as they become available.