



Strengthening Families Through Enhanced In-Home Support Program

Statewide Pilot

December 3, 2007

Legislative Objectives

In 2007, the 80th Legislature, in SB 758, required DFPS to develop & implement an enhanced in-home support program to divert children from foster care or shorten a child's stay in substitute care.

Goals

- ❖ Maintain child safety
- ❖ Prevent child removal (500 children)
- ❖ Speed reunification
- ❖ Enhance family stability and functioning
- ❖ Reduce the family's stress

Strengthening Families

The Program

- ❖ Combines intensive in-home services with limited financial assistance
- ❖ Specialized caseworkers deliver
- ❖ Piloted in selected counties
- ❖ Mobilizes formal and informal support systems

Target Families — approximately 1500 per year

- ❖ Validated for neglect (Neglectful Supervision, Physical Neglect, Medical Neglect)
- ❖ Impoverished families and children in child neglect cases
- ❖ Poverty is determined to be an underlying cause of the neglect
- ❖ Reside in one of the pilot counties

Note: Family may not have been validated for Sexual Abuse

Research & Experience Tell Us:

- ❖ No single cause of child neglect but often tied to poverty & lack of resources
- ❖ Newly neglectful families – characterized by high stress due to recent life crises
- ❖ Chronically neglectful families – require sustained intervention with multiple services
- ❖ Group services can be more effective with neglectful families than one-on-one services

Eligibility

- ❖ Recommended for Family Based Safety Services (FBSS) or Family Reunification services by CPS
- ❖ FBSS – child in home or voluntarily placed in safe home, and at risk of removal
- ❖ Reunification – plan to return in near future
- ❖ At or below 200% of poverty
- ❖ Identified problem in the home environment contributed to neglect and can be remedied by benefits and services in this program
- ❖ Be a parent by blood, marriage, adoption or managing conservatorship of a child victim/at risk of neglect
- ❖ Child must be citizen or qualified resident of U.S.

Process

- ❖ CPS identifies a child at increased risk of removal due to neglect, or a family where poverty issues may delay a reunification
- ❖ Family meets all eligibility criteria and is accepting of the services
- ❖ Assigned to specialized caseworker in Strengthening Families for Intensive Family Based Safety Services
- ❖ Use of family meetings for planning
- ❖ Intensified contact with child and family
- ❖ Case resolution in 2-4 months

Funding & Purchased Goods

- ❖ Must be connected to problems, goals and objectives
- ❖ Family identifies what best meets needs
- ❖ Documented in the Family Plan of Service
- ❖ Non-traditional
- ❖ Non-recurring

Funding & Purchased Goods

Family Enhancement

- ❖ Monetary assistance - \$250 is maximum cumulative amount
- ❖ Ex: groceries, rent, car repairs, utilities

Family Empowerment

- ❖ Purchased goods and services – max. amount cumulative is \$3,000
- ❖ Normalization activities – YMCA, sports, scouts
- ❖ Improves family functioning & child well-being - GED for parents, 1-on-1 parent coaching

Note: These goods and services will not duplicate services already available in the community at no cost or through CPS contracts.

Benefits

- ❖ Family driven
- ❖ Supportive
- ❖ Least intrusive
- ❖ Strength Based
- ❖ Individualized
- ❖ Non-traditional
- ❖ Conducive to wrap-around approach

Evaluation

- ❖ Cases identified and tracked
- ❖ Family Empowerment Goods & Services utilized tracked
- ❖ Cost effectiveness analyzed
- ❖ Outcomes - Pre and Post comparison
- ❖ Client satisfaction

Questions & Answers

<http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About/Stakeholders/>