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
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

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.
Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Benefits

- Family driven
- Supportive
- Least intrusive
- Strength Based
- Individualized
- Non-traditional
- Conducive to wrap-a-round 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/