

WORKING WITH THE L.A. COUNTY DEPARTMENT  
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

# A GUIDE FOR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS



AN EVOLUTION OF PRACTICE  
IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

The L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) is committed to empowering families, caregivers and communities to meet the needs of children for the long-term.

Ensuring the safety and well-being of children is at the heart of our work.

# SUCCESS TAKES TEAMWORK



**The CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM is a proven approach to strengthening families by sharing their story and connecting them with resources to promote safety, healing and recovery. Families and caregivers play a vital role in this process!**

## **What is a CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM?**

A Child and Family Team is a group of people selected by the family who work together to help families achieve their goals and meet the unique needs of children. A Child and Family Team includes the family and child (if old enough), child welfare professionals, and others in the community who support the family. This could include close relatives, friends, a coach, school staff, Parent Partners (PIPs), members of a faith community, or service providers already working with the family.

The team comes together in the Child and Family Team Meeting.





# THE CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM



## What happens during a **CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM Meeting?**

The Child and Family Team Meeting provides an opportunity to:

- Explore the family story
- Identify the child and family's strengths
- Identify the child and family's needs, and share ideas to meet those needs
- Discuss any worries among the team concerning safety
- Recognize things that are going well and discuss ways to improve things in the future
- Collaborate with relatives, community partners and others to identify resources and develop action steps to meet the child and family's goals and needs

**Families lead their Child and Family Team Meeting, with the help of a facilitator.**

## What are the benefits of a **CHILD AND FAMILY TEAM?**

- It leads to better decisions and better outcomes for families
- It includes people who can help the family succeed
- It identifies and builds on the family's existing strengths
- It leads to decisions made **with** families, not **for** families
- It provides an opportunity for your voice to be heard

**WE SEEK TO BE  
TRUE PARTNERS  
IN OUR WORK  
TOGETHER.**

**The professionals of L.A. County DCFS are committed to working with children, families and caregivers in a manner that is:**

#### **STRENGTH-BASED**

Together, we build teams and make plans that use the family's strengths to overcome challenges and meet the needs of the child.

#### **CHILD- AND FAMILY-CENTERED**

We connect families to a caring network of local, community-based support designed to continue even after formal services have ended.

#### **SOLUTION-ORIENTED**

Our aim is not to point fingers or dwell in the past, but rather to provide solutions leading to a brighter tomorrow.

#### **TRANSPARENT**

We communicate clearly and openly, and ask that you do the same. Open communication is vital to ensuring children are safe and nurtured.

#### **CULTURALLY SENSITIVE**

L.A. County is home to families of many ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. We are committed to providing services that build on your unique strengths and experiences.



**If You Are in Crisis and Need Help Right Away,  
Call Our Toll-Free Access Helpline, Any Time 24/7:**

**1-800-854-7771**