

MISSION STATEMENT

SHIELDS for families is a non-profit community-based organization dedicated to developing, delivering, and evaluating culturally sensitive, comprehensive service models that empower and advocate for high-risk families for over 20 years.



We believe that with education, access to appropriate services and caring guidance, families can rebuild their lives and become productive members of the community, nurturing parents and achieve all of their dreams.



HISTORY

SHIELDS was formed in 1987 in response to high incidence of infants born prenatally exposed to drugs at Martin Luther King Hospital in South Central Los Angeles.

SHIELDS began providing services to this unique population and has since grown to provide over 30 comprehensive, family-centered, wrap-around programs addressing issues facing high-risk families in South LA.



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SHIELDS for Families is an equal opportunity service provider that does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship/status as a lawfully admitted immigrant authorized to work in the United States, or participation in any WIA Title I-financially assisted program or activity. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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SHIELDS APSS provides comprehensive case management services, mental health and supportive resources for DCFS referred families who are considering adoption, in the adoption process, or whose adoptions have been finalized.

Adoption Promotion and Support Services (APSS)





The goal of SHIELDS' APSS is to increase permanency for children in SPA 6 that are involved in the adoption process. APSS provides services free of charge for families in need of adoption support or at risk of adoption disruption at any stage of the adoption process. Children in long term foster care, sibling groups, foster parents and prospective adoptive parents are provided with a spectrum of services, including **linkages to the community, parent mentoring, youth mentoring, therapy, and support groups** to help families navigate through their adoption related concerns.

Implemented in 2005 as a part of a new initiative to increase permanency for children in Los Angeles County, SHIELDS' APSS is a resource for adoptive families and families considering adoption. The program provides support to children and adoptive families to nurture lifetime commitments, to ensure permanency for children, to expedite the



adoption process, and to reduce disruption of adoption. **Case management** services ensure a service plan designed to strengthen and preserve the child and/or family.

In addition, APSS provides individual, group or family therapy, mentors, and support groups for children and/or adults, focused on adoption-related issues.

APSS follows the model of core issues in adoption and provides all family members with information in the process of the following core issues: loss, rejection, guilt and shame, grief, identity, intimacy, mastery and control. Referrals to the APSS program must be made by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

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Program Highlights

- Since implementation, APSS has assisted families in the finalization of 36 adoptions as well as the reunification of 4 biological families
- Parents and children are empowered through information, support and skills to be involved partners in directing their own permanency planning and decision making.