

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.

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.



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.



believing, building, becoming

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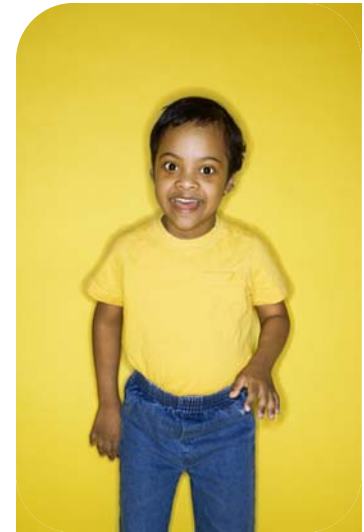


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SHIELDS for Families is an equal opportunity service provider that does not discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation or belief, citizenship/status as a lawfully 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.

www.shieldsforfamilies.org

Child Welfare Division



SHIELDS helps vulnerable children and families succeed. For families affected by the child welfare system, we provide a full continuum of services—from prevention to adoption. SHIELDS is a leader in the field; our work has deeply influenced Los Angeles' child-welfare initiatives, policies and procedures.



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A child's well-being is our highest priority. Because we believe in the power of families, we are there on the front lines when a family is in crisis.

Sometimes, all a family needs is a month's worth of groceries or help finding a job; other times, families in deep crisis are split apart. SHIELDS' wide range of services meet families' needs.

We know that child abuse is preventable. That is why we are participating in the Partnership for Families, a county-wide child abuse prevention initiative funded by First 5 LA. We serve pregnant women and families with children age 5 or younger who are at the highest risk of child neglect and abuse. These services include intensive case management, emergency food and clothing, medical care and job-placement assistance.

When the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) responds to a crisis, SHIELDS staff works directly with the county's emergency teams in our **Up-Front Assessments/Point of Engagement Program**.

Our clinical staff assist in DCFS's assessment of the family home and offer immediate assistance and long-term programs to help keep families together. High-risk families can receive intensive case management, home visits and other services to reduce the risk of abuse and out-of-home placements through our **Family Preservation Services**. Our **Family Support Program** serves 300 families referred by DCFS each year. Using a comprehensive, family-strength-based approach, case managers provide home visits and supportive services to strengthen families and prevent abuse. Families in need of intensive services also benefit from our **Alternative Response Program**, which helps lower-risk families stay together by strengthening families and promoting a safe and nurturing environment.

If children must be separated from their parents, SHIELDS is there to help provide children with caring placements and supportive services. SHIELDS offers comprehensive assessments and linkages to resources for children who are in out-of-home placement under DCFS jurisdiction, plus their families and caregivers.



When reunion with parents is impossible, SHIELDS supports the stability and healthy development of children and youth through Adoption Promotion & Support services. We offer individual and family therapy, mentoring, support groups and case management to ensure that children transition smoothly to loving, permanent care.

Because SHIELDS believes in the power of innovation and research, we partnered with DCFS and seven other service providers in South Los Angeles to test and evaluate strategies for preventing child abuse and neglect through the Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project. Our ASK (Ask, Seek, Knock) Program provides four Family Resource Centers located throughout South Los Angeles. Each center offers a continuum of services including linkages, support groups, legal services, educational classes, vocational training, job placement, community libraries and book clubs. Families referred from DCFS, as well as community residents, can access needed resources and services through any of the centers. The program also has a strong evaluation component that we are using to identify the best ways to keep children safe from harm, prevent families from entering and re-entering the county's health and human services system, and reduce the length of out-of-home-placement.

Programs Include

- ACT (Achieving Change Together) Program: Partnerships for Families (PFF)
- Adoption Promotion and Support Services (APSS)
- ASK (Ask, Seek, Knock) Program: Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP)
- Family Support
- MultiDisciplinary Assessment Team (MAT)