



Program Descriptions

“What We Do Around Here”

www.RoadAheadFamilyServices.org

Agency Goals:

Program Goals and Objectives:

The goal of The Parenthood Partnership Program is to aim to stop child maltreatment before it occurs, mitigate risk factors associated with child abuse and/or neglect, reduce the negative consequences of maltreatment, and prevent re-maltreatment and/or re-entry into the public child welfare system. RAFS provides the services and supports to prevent initial referrals generated by the Child Abuse Hotline; substantiated allegations of child abuse and/or neglect; newly opened child welfare cases; and child removals and placement in out of home care among community and self-referred clients.

Target Population

The Road Ahead Family Services targets the following population: Families referred by DCFS; General population including self-referred; Walk-in clients, Community stakeholder referrals such as schools, hospitals and law enforcement agencies; Families and children at risk of abuse and/or neglect; and the juvenile probation department.

Payment

The Road Ahead offers a variety of payment options depending on the needs of the client. We do not accept MediCal at this time and there is no need for private insurance. We can use Victim of Crime funding or private pay sliding scale.

Mental Health Services:

Program Activities

Intake and Assessment Services: RAFS' counselors will provide intake services to all client individuals and/or families via face-to-face meetings and /or interventions. Assessor will collaborate with a family and team to obtain information about the significant events impacting children and families and the underlying needs that are bringing about their situation. Assessment process continues throughout services to identify the underlying needs (including child and family trauma needs), and determine the availability and capability of resources needed to make progress.

Psychotherapy: These services are provided by RAFS to families via face-to-face meetings and/or interventions by a therapist with an individual, couple, family, or group to: address mental health issues; help raise self-awareness and understanding; help to solve problems; assist in the development of insight. Psychotherapeutic services may be provided in the office, off-site, or in the home. RAFS will give priority for psychotherapeutic services to those families referred by the DCFS and the juvenile probation department.

Counseling Groups: Our group therapy/ psycho-education model allows clients to obtain information, understanding, and intervention regarding a given topic while also exploring their own histories, thoughts and belief systems, as well as, analyzing their past maladaptive behaviors. We have found

that this paves the way for parents to take responsibility for past mistakes, make plans towards change, and internalize the skills and interventions presented. Groups run for 16 weeks and have a flexible curriculum that is modified according to the individual needs of the group.

“ Un-Hush”, Sexual Abuse Awareness Group: This is a group for parents that have had a child that has been sexually abused. This group is only offered to non-offending parents and/or caregivers. Learning objectives of this group include: acknowledge their own experiences as valuable resources; recognize that listening to a child describe his/her sexual abuse may be shocking and upsetting for the parent; maintain composure when faced with shocking information and terms; recognize that children of different cultures may use different words to describe their victimization; understand how to discuss sexual abuse issues with children; know the facts and statistics related to child sexual abuse; know why it is important to talk with children about sexual abuse; acknowledge that a child from a different culture may be carrying additional guilt due to his/her cultural values about sexuality; understand the impact of sexual abuse on a child’s trust; recognize that sexual abuse is not forgotten by the child; understand coping mechanisms used by sexual abuse survivors and the effects of coping mechanisms; understand the possible long-term effects of sexual abuse; recognize the importance of communicating honestly with the child; recognize the need for family rules; endorse the need of regularly scheduled family meetings; list common family rules used with a sexually abused child; understand information that needs to be shared with the child when he/she discloses sexual abuse; and more.

It has been our experience that many parents that have children that have been sexually abused also have their own sexual abuse history. This group is a forum for parents to also have a corrective experience and understand how their trauma histories have impacted their lives.

“Parenting T.I.P.”, Trauma-Informed Parenting Group (Tier I): With an adapted curriculum from The National Child Traumatic Stress Network (used to train ITFC foster parents), RAFS provides psycho-education/ group therapy to parents. We consider this our Tier I group as it provides parents the most crucial information regarding the impact of trauma on their child’s development. In this group, we explore the parent’s perception of trauma, reframe the parent’s understanding of how past actions have impacted the child, review behavioral expectations of children with trauma histories, and help parents develop a parenting plan to help the child through the traumatic event. This program works on the model that each parent has a unique relationship to their child/ren and that each of their circumstances is different. Parents work on the “My Child” workbook throughout the 16 weeks, which ties psycho-education material and group discussions with their unique child, thereby enhancing the meaningfulness of the group for the parent. This group is provided in English and in Spanish.

“Off-Road Parenting” Parenting Group (Tier II): This group explores ways parents can improve children's behavior by teaching cooperation, tracking their actions, using positive reinforcement, writing contracts and enforcing limits such as house rules, time outs, or extra chores. The group discusses an overview of each topic and parents develop roadmaps to follow (which they return with feedback from the group from week to week). Group role plays to identify whether they resolve the problem immediately (harmony) or watch the child continue to misbehave (misery) in order to learn additional techniques to handle defiance. Counselors provide ideas and materials and explain why the methods work. By offering a variety of scenarios and solutions, the group provides alternatives for dealing with difficulties common to children from toddler to teen years.

“The Graduate” Parenting Group (Tier III): Upon successful completion of Tier I and Tier II parenting, parents will have the opportunity to continue to develop an understanding of their role and identity as parents, to identify the individual needs of their children, and to meet those needs. This is a good parenting group for parents that have already taken parenting classes elsewhere and need to make the connections between the information they have learned and their own child/situation.

“Hit The Road Anger”, Anger Management Group: This group is designed to help parents gain self-awareness of the impact of anger issues in their homes, families and communities. This is a strength-based program to help clients identify the root of their anger and uncover coping techniques that have been effective in the past for the client. The group explores new techniques for problem solving, conflict resolution, healthy assertiveness, and increased self-esteem. This group uses a CBT model; assigns homework and reading (which can be completed with one-on-one help of a counselor for clients that are struggling in their understanding of the material); and role-playing.

“Enough!”, Victim of Domestic Violence Group: Our VOC groups is a closed group focusing on psycho-education, building self-awareness, assertiveness training, conflict resolution and ultimately increasing self-esteem! This is an intense curriculum of group therapy offered in English and in Spanish!

“Fake It ‘Till You Make It”, TAY Social Skill Building Group: This is a hybrid group through our partnership with The Santa Clarita School of Performing Arts, designed to include improvisational skills, public speaking, assertiveness training, and basic social skills to provide the tools to transitional-aged youths to shed the stigma of their involvement with child protective services, increase self-esteem and ability to effectively navigate and thrive in the “real world”.

“The Apple and The Tree”, Parent-Adolescent Group: This group is a two-hour weekly group to navigate parent-child relationships, fortify the family bond, increase self-awareness, increase conflict resolution among parents and their children. The group is composed of one hour of parent-child group and one hour of “break away” group in which adolescents and parents are in separate groups.

“Wheels on The Road”: All groups can be run in local communities as needed through the support of our community partners (schools, community centers, religious organizations, etc.). In consideration that our groups form an informal support system among participants within a community, when possible, groups will be offered in remote sites to increase the sense of community and belonging of the participants and reduce travel time and cost of transportation.

“The Attachment Clinic”: This group is designed for the biological parents and infants that have been placed in out of home care. Utilizing monitored visits, biological parents learn developmental milestones, how to promote the acquiring of skills, bonding and attachment, as well as engagement in a group environment class that is led weekly by therapists. Parents must sign monitor agreement allowing our staff to be the monitor during the group and agreeing to abide by the monitored group rules. This is an excellent opportunity for biological parents to get to know their infant and to form a secured attachment. This group combines psychoeducation, group counseling, breakout family counseling, infant/child self-soothing and parent/child activities.

“Survivor”: Teen survivors are a diverse group, from a 13-year-old boy who was abused as a preschooler to a pregnant 18-year-old who is living with her sexually abusive partner. Survivors may be from any ethnic or cultural group and have diverse sexual orientations and gender identities. The adolescent years are a challenging time of rapid physical, emotional, and intellectual growth for all young people. Teens who have experienced sexual abuse or assault face additional challenges that can divert them from mastering the important developmental tasks of this stage. The shame and distress that many teen survivors experience can lead to disrupted relationships (with friends, parents, and partners), distortions of body image, mood disorders, substance abuse, and other concerns that carry their own severe consequences. In the healing atmosphere of a support group, teen survivors can learn that the abuse was not their fault, that they can be whole and happy, and that they can have hope for the future. Teens’ natural inclination to bond with their peers can help them to form supportive relationships with other group members.

In-Home Services:

Individual and family counseling are provided in-home to reduce the cost of transportation to the client and increase time effectiveness of services. Professional therapists provide psychotherapy in the home during the schedules the families are available (including weekends and evenings).

Individual therapists are a part of the client’s treatment team and as such, meet weekly with the group therapy leaders to conduct case consultations. In this way we close the gap between service providers and work towards a common goal with the client.

With families that have DCFS open cases, RAFS obtains releases from the family to include the CSW as a part of the team and request the detention report and minute orders. This allows therapist to process with the client the initial feelings regarding the open case, strength-base reframing of the involvement of the county social worker, understand the detention report concerns and plan accurately towards developing a case plan that increases the safety of the children in the home or helps meet the goals towards reunification.

During in-home intake, the counselors provide the families with immediate safety concerns in the home and help the families develop a safety plan to ensure the well being of the children in the home and other family members.

Case Management/Linkage Services/Referrals: RAFS’s Case Management Services will consist of: Intake and assessment of the client/family needs, Development of the case plan; identify client therapeutic needs; Identify client basis needs; Referrals and linkages for services identified in the case plan using Linkage Form; Follow-up; Assess client progress and success of the case plan; Evaluation of case plan progress; Document continuous improvement of families circumstances.

Case Plans: RAFS will, at three month intervals, conducts ongoing reviews and documentation of the family’s progress toward achieving their goals as identified in their written case plan. The intake will include an assessment of the Strengthening Families Protective Factors Framework (Center for the Study of Social Policy’s Strengthening Families™ Approach). Consistent with the DCFS Shared Core Practice Model the RAFS will engage the individual and/or family in the case planning process to

develop a case plan which meets the individual needs for each child and family. The case plan will address the protective factor(s) which were assessed to need strengthening.

Referrals and Case management: RAFS coordinates and collaborates with other agencies as necessary, to facilitate successful client navigation across **the** service delivery continuum. Services may include drug and alcohol counseling, homeless shelters, domestic violence programs, basic needs services (food, furniture, and clothing), VOC referrals or others.

Parenting Education Services: In addition to our hybrid counseling/psycho-education groups, RAFS offers training for parents on discipline, child development, behavior management, and anger control. Furthermore, RAFS continues to offer shorter education seminars for clients on current trending topics such as eating disorders, parenting adolescents, the angry child, bullying, and other topics that are identified as of need or interest to our clients.

Sites and referral process: Our main office is in Mission Hills, but we provide in home counseling for all of San Fernando Valley, Santa Clarita Valley and Antelope Valley.

Therapeutic/Intensive Foster Care

Program Description

RAFS Therapeutic Foster Care is a not-for-profit social service agency that provides foster care services for at-risk children with special emotional, developmental and educational needs. Our foster care program provides services for children between the ages of birth to 22. The majority of our clients are between the ages of 6 to 21.

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide specialized home-based foster care to a diverse population of at-risk children and their families. We utilize a multi-disciplinary approach to treatment that values the child's unique potential. We emphasize innovative program development, teamwork, and clinical excellence. The cornerstone of this delivery system is to assist, serve, and respond to our clients, Proctor Parents, and referring agencies

Referral Sources

Our referrals are through the Department of Children and Families Services (DCFS) in Los Angeles.

The Children Who We Serve

The children who we serve may have had histories of abuse, both physical and sexual, neglect, or may have witnessed other forms of violence in the home. Because of these reasons, the children are removed from the home and are placed in foster care where they can become healthier while they work on their treatment goals.

Length of Stay

Children stay in foster care until they have reached their treatment goals and are ready to enter into their permanency plan. Possible permanency plans may be: (1) Reunification with the biological parents, (2) Adoption, or (3) Independent living. In cases where the goal is Reunification with biological parents, the child's parents must also meet the goals on their plans in order to have their child return to them.

Foster Parent Benefits

RAFS' foster parents are offered many benefits for their services. These include:

- Generous tax free monthly stipend
- \$300 new foster parent referral bonuses
- Foster Parent Liability Insurance
- Up to 8 days of paid respite
- Extensive support systems
- Free pre-and in-service training.

Minimum Qualifications

- Potential Foster Parents must meet the following qualifications
- At least 21 years of age
- Valid Driver's License
- Reliable Transportation
- Ability to speak, read and write English
- All foster parents must undergo a Criminal Background Check
- Applicants cannot run a daycare out of their home, or have any more than three children