



Together For A Better Community

Kern County Network for Children

2008-09 Annual Report



Mission

To protect & enrich the lives of Kern County children through the commitment of all community partners by helping to build & sustain healthy families.

Making Community Connections

- ◆ On average **88** service providers & community members attend monthly General Collaborative meetings promote networking, information sharing & cross-training
- ◆ Collaborative attendees represented **120** local agencies & community organizations FY 2008-09
- ◆ KCNC staff participate on **31** individual state & local committees, task forces & boards concerned with child welfare, foster youth, child care, juvenile justice & family assistance
- ◆ KCNC staff contribute to **11** community planning & issues collaboratives
- ◆ Nearly **800** on e-mail distribution list & growing
- ◆ **950** average monthly hits to KCNC website

Building & Strengthening Community Capacity

- ◆ **20** KCNC Accredited Community Collaboratives receive on-going technical assistance & evaluation services
- ◆ **39** total hours of monthly free quality professional development training including case management practices, domestic violence, special needs, media & safety
- ◆ **103** public/private agencies & community groups represented at KCNC **17** trainings with an average of **78** attendees per training

Developing Community Leadership

- ◆ **25** agencies represented 2009 Class
- ◆ **96%** of 2009 graduates exited program with average leadership survey score above 2.0, demonstrating maturing leadership skills
- ◆ **42%** overall improvement in leadership skills

Generating & Administrating Funding Streams

The Kern County Network for Children (KCNC) is responsible for providing technical assistance, training, evaluation services and monitoring the quality of services provided by administering the following funding streams:

- ◆ *Child Abuse Prevention, Intervention and Treatment (CAPIT)*
- AB 1733
- ◆ *Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF)*
- ◆ *Children's Trust Fund - AB 2994*
- ◆ *Community Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP)*
- ◆ *Outcome Improvement Project*
- ◆ *Foster Youth Services (FYS)*
- ◆ *The California Endowment - CCROPP*

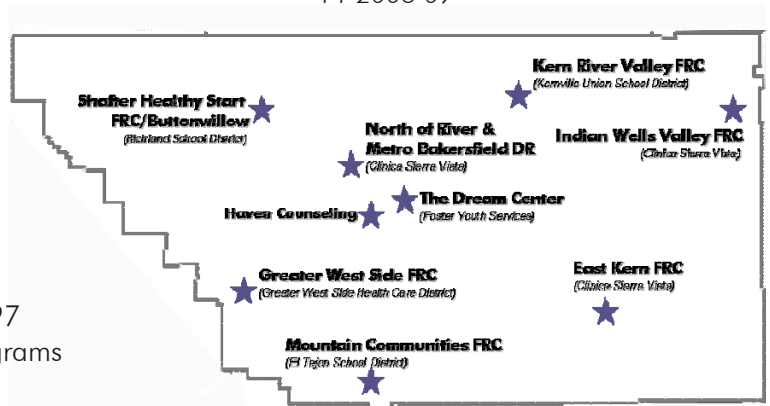
Points Of Pride During Year

- ◆ Grand opening of The Dream Center & Coffee House
- ◆ More than **500** Leadership Development graduates since 1997
- ◆ Social Solutions ETO software fully implemented with **14** programs
- ◆ The Dream Center nominated for Beautiful Bakersfield Award

What Makes KCNC Unique

- ◆ Promotes collaboration among agencies & organizations to foster best practices, information sharing & new ideas
- ◆ Assists in collaborative planning & coordination of services to children & families
- ◆ Supports County's CWS Self Improvement Plan
- ◆ Assists growth of effective family support programs by providing technical assistance, high quality training, contract assistance & evaluation services
- ◆ Develops community leadership
- ◆ Facilitates public-private partnerships to support the well-being & success of children & youth

Empowering. Connecting. Advocating
Programs Supported By KCNC Throughout Kern County
FY 2008-09



Building Brighter Futures For Kern Foster Youth

Each year about 200 youth emancipate in Kern County. Statistics show that 54% of foster youth do not complete high school and less than 3% of foster youth attend college. Moreover, within 2-4 years following emancipation, 40% of foster youth are on public assistance and 51% are unemployed.

The Dream Center

Under the auspice of KCNC, FYS and local community partners, the Dream Center is an innovative resource center for foster youth that serves as a one-stop for comprehensive, integrated services and unique job training for Kern foster youth. The Dream Center strives to improve the transitional success of foster youth by creating a system of informal and formal support services to reduce duplication of services and increase service accessibility for youth. The following data describes services provided to youth from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009:



- ♦ **27** foster youth are tutored through Project DREAM by **13** CSUB students in the 2009-2010 school year
- ♦ Project DREAM students averaged **1.5** years of growth in Reading & **1.7** years in Math after 6 months of tutoring in 2008-2009
- ♦ Case managed foster youth averaged **less than one** school & residential placement during the 2008-2009 school year
- ♦ **19** foster youth participated in 6-week leadership camp with a focus on the development of writing skills, team building in summer of 2009
- ♦ **70** current & former foster youth have accessed Resource Center's services an average of **6** times during the year
- ♦ **7** emancipated foster youth trained to serve as advocates for youth in care and/or Peer Mentors
- ♦ **8** youth lead and/or participate in the Dream Team, providing input in Dream Center's services, youth activities & County policy development
- ♦ Dream Center hosts College Study Nights, Parenting Teens Support Groups, California Youth Connection meetings & financial planning workshops
- ♦ **6** former foster youth representing the Dream Center have spoken at state conferences, local agencies & service to create awareness of foster youth issues

Promoting Positive Parenting, Healthy Families & Supportive Communities

Kern's 2008 substantiated child abuse rate was 20.8 per 1,000 children compared to 9.7 statewide. The legislative intent for several funding streams administered by KCNC is to prevent child abuse and neglect. Administered by KCNC, Differential Response (DR), Haven Counseling include integrated case management, family support and advocacy, parent education for court-ordered families, reunification support services, and public education for the prevention of child abuse.

Haven Counseling Center

The Haven Counseling Center is dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect through advocacy, education and collaboration. As a family stress counseling center, Haven Counseling offers individual, family and group counseling services to families experiencing abusive or potentially abusive situations and other stressful family difficulties. Haven Counseling also offers parent education classes for voluntary as well as court referred individuals, guided visitation services and family reunification services. The following data describes services provided to families from July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009:

- ♦ **88** families enrolled in case management services averaged a **29%** increase in family functioning after receiving 6 months of services
- ♦ **70%** of families at the end of their case management exited as "stable" or "self-sufficient"
- ♦ **680** parents received parenting instruction with a completion rate of **86%**
- ♦ Parents who completed the parenting classes averaged a **22%** improvement in knowledge of parenting skills
- ♦ **164** parents received counseling services
- ♦ **73%** of parents completed court ordered parenting classes
- ♦ **90%** of families completed court reunification orders (n=39)
- ♦ **87%** of families successfully reunited with children in placement (n=36)
- ♦ Parents of **15** families participated in support groups for reunified families & **97%** were satisfied with services
- ♦ **26** families received guided visitation services
- ♦ Parents participating in guided visitation demonstrated a **32%** increase in parenting behavior during visitation



Kern County Differential Response

DR increases access to supportive services for families at risk of abuse or neglect so that they will become stronger and self-sufficient to prevent future child abuse/neglect and ensure children will remain safely at home, without need for foster care or formal CPS intervention. Trained, qualified organizations and integrated case management services provide a range of supportive services and linkages for families to counseling, parenting education, job training, food and housing assistance. The following data describes services provided to families through DR:

Case Characteristics & Family Engagement

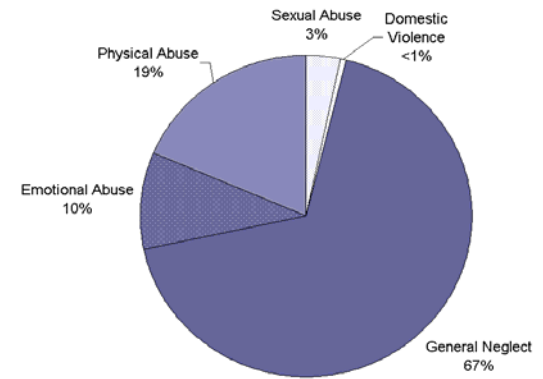
- 2,003 DR referrals have been sent to 7 sites throughout Kern County
- 1,241 families including 3,872 children enrolled in DR case management services, 203% of annual goal of 610 families sitewide
- 62% of referred families accepted DR case management services over the year
- The average family who successfully completed DR case management received services for 73 days
- 256 parents received parenting instruction with a completion rate of 77%
- Parents who completed the parenting classes averaged a 28% improvement in knowledge of parenting skills
- 97% of clients surveyed were satisfied overall with the case management services they received

Family Well-Being & Child Safety

- 64% of families at the end of their case management exited as "stable" or "self-sufficient"
- Family functioning improved 13% overall after completing case management according to the Social Conditions Matrix
- 26% increase in Conditions of Children Matrix intake to exit scores
- An analysis of 2008-2009 DR & DHS records demonstrated 16.2% of Kern families who received DR services had one or more additional DR referrals from CPS after case management vs. 31.4% of families referred to DR who did not receive case management services
- 98% of clients surveyed believe their families were doing better since receiving case management services
- 95% of clients surveyed indicated they felt linked to more services available to their families in the community since receiving case management services
- 99% of clients surveyed believed the services they received helped their children remain in their homes

DR Referrals: Allegation Type*

Kern County Differential Response Families
October 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009



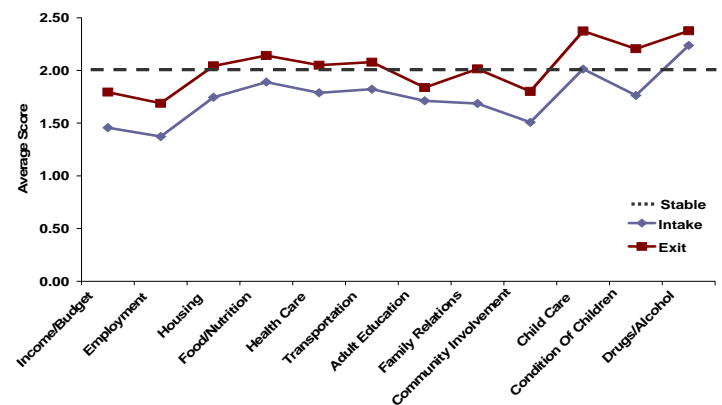
*Families may have more than one allegation on referral



"My case manager has helped me to believe in myself and find pride and a sense of achievement in all of my accomplished goals big or small." - DR case-managed parent

Social Condition Matrix: Family Functioning By Life Domain

Kern County Differential Response Families
October 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009



Most Important Information & Life Skills Gained by Parents Through DR

- "I learned how to talk to my children and understand them."
- "Have confidence in myself."
- "Cooking meals daily is best for my family and I have more patience with my children and I stay home a lot more."
- "How to handle my teenage children and control my household."
- "That our kids are above all things, and that they deserve respect just like any other person."
- "Responsibility"
- "That nothing is more important than family no matter what."
- "[Case management] showed me how to be more involved with my kids and how to put them first and not to make any more bad decisions."



Success Stories

Every day, programs receiving KCNC support see parents become more effective, and children grow more secure as the result of their integrated case management services and support resources to families, children and foster youth. These are some of their stories.

A grandmother was routinely seen in town pushing a large stroller with her four young grandchildren she was raising. Despite having a stable income, she had been chronically homeless for several years and chose to live with friends or at the local women's shelter. The grandmother was a familiar face at the Resource Center and often asked for diapers, formula, food and other assistance. However, once referred to DR, things began to change for her and her family. Her case manager encouraged her to rent her own home. She is now in a decent home in a stable neighborhood, The children now have a permanent address and appear much happier. The client is now able to provide her family with a stability they have never known. (Differential Response)

A mother in parenting classes and Guided Visitation had her children removed due to drug abuse and domestic violence. Mother lived in a home that was in very bad shape and the water was turned off. Haven Counseling worked with the Housing Authority of Kern to get her into a newer apartment and purchased a cooler for her room because of her history of seizures. Mother has done well in Guided Visitation and Family Matters and has been able to have unsupervised visits with three of her four children. (Haven Counseling)

Max is a 20 year old former foster youth who originally came to Kern County from New York and quickly found himself in foster care system due to abuse and neglect. He lived in over 15 foster homes/group homes since he was 11. "It was rough," he explains and he never felt connected. Max's involvement with CYC-California Youth Connection led him to the Dream Center to work with the Independent Living Program. He immediately fell in love with the resource center and feels for the first time that he has a family that supports his dreams. Recently, Dream Center staff bought Max a cake to celebrate his 20th birthday. He teared up while the staff sang him "Happy Birthday." Staff later discovered it was the first time in Max's life that he got a birthday cake or balloons. Through collaborative efforts between Dream Center staff and Bakersfield College Outreach Programs, this special young man now has financial aid and work study (job) and is applying to be a Bakersfield College Ambassador. Without the connections at the Dream Center, Max says he would have never found his way to college. (Dream Center)

A client in parenting classes is a grandfather with custody of his grandchildren due to his daughter's substance abuse issues. The grandfather, who is Vietnamese and speaks no English, had his grandchildren removed from him due to neglect. He was ordered to take a parenting class, but none were available in his language and he did not have someone who could translate sufficiently. DHS arranged the use of the Universal Translator via telephone and he began his parenting classes one on one with a therapist at Haven. He has established a trusting relationship with the therapist, is progressing well in his classes and is on track for reunification. (Haven Counseling)

For the last two years, 17 year old "Anna" has participated in the Project DREAM tutoring program. She entered foster care at a very young age and eventually found herself on Juvenile Probation. After living in foster homes and with relatives, she now resides in a group home. She has had many struggles throughout her high school career, bouncing from school to school and eventually ending up at a community school due to truancy, behavioral problems, and overall poor academic performance. As a result of the hard work and dedication of Anna and her tutor, she was able to catch up on her credits and transition back to mainstream education at a local high school. She is now on track to graduate in June 2010 with her peers. Anna says that without Project DREAM tutoring, this would not be the case. She said that tutoring gave her the help she needed focus on her homework, something that is not easily done in the chaotic environment of her group home. (FYS Project DREAM Tutoring)

A young mother of three, diagnosed with Multiple Personality Disorder, Bi-Polar Disorder and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, was on the verge of getting a divorce. All three children exhibited signs of mental illness and client disclosed that they all had been sexually abused. At time of the first meeting, mother's mental health issues were not being dealt with, but through phone calls and referrals, she received the counseling and medication she needed. The case manager has also worked with the client on developing coping skills and how to access referrals in the community. The client and her husband are working on their marriage and the husband was referred to NAMI's Family to Family Program. The client is now enrolled in college classes and is receiving Social Security benefits for her oldest child who had attempted suicide. The family is much more stable and able to access resources on their own. (Differential Response)

After refusing DR services the previous year, a young mother of six children grudgingly accepted services only after CPS reentered her life and from the persistence of DR staff. The reluctant client was not striving for any real change until her seventh child was born with a positive toxicology screen and all children were then removed from the home. The DR case manager helped the client enroll in all classes and sessions that were mandated in order to get her children back. While the client's original goal was to "keep CPS out of my life," through case management services, she has since made many new goals such as stop using drugs, apply for section 8, keep a cleaner home, get her children registered for school and help them to be successful. As a result of DR case management, this client now has consistently tested negative for drugs, receives section 8 housing assistance, has been introduced to many agencies through referrals, and has a child receiving services from Kern Regional Center. She has also taken advantage of the resource center's summer bridging programs, has received a parenting certificate for the New Beginnings parenting class, and has been registered with Owens Valley Tribal TANIF. We are happy to report that this client has successfully completed our program and is currently in progress of becoming a self-sufficient family. (Differential Response)