

East San Fernando Valley Family Support Center

FACT SHEET

Vision

To build a multi-agency, community-based center for residents of the East San Fernando Valley that provides integrated and coordinated prevention and intervention services to improve the lives of children and families by helping families achieve economic stability and self-sufficiency and protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Purpose

Provide children and families with services that are family-focused, needs driven, strengths-based, and linked to a range of County and community resources;
Create a warm, welcoming and supportive space in the community for families to access health and human services, and to serve as a gathering place for community-based activities;
Build on the County's existing service integration efforts by implementing a cross-agency, multi-disciplinary team approach to serving select target populations at the Center through the use of integrated tools such as common intake forms, multi-disciplinary screening, assessment and case management; and
Provide comprehensive information, referral, and screening for children and families within the communities served by the Center, to ensure that clients have access to the services and supports they need, with particular emphasis on referrals provided to existing services available in the community.

Facility Design

The County issued an RFP in April 2005 for a 175,000 square foot build-to-suit building in the East San Fernando Valley. The County is currently reviewing proposals with selection of a developer and site expected by early 2006. Occupancy of the building is scheduled for early 2008. (See Service Boundary Map.)

The proposed space plan includes approximately 20,000 square feet devoted to the following publicly accessible areas: a lobby/reception area that includes a "Welcome Center" where clients are welcomed and directed to the services they need; a staffed resource and referral information area with additional kiosks accessible to the public; a semi-public area of interview rooms directly off the lobby/reception area; a public snack room; and a large conference room that will also serve as a Community Room for use by the community for meetings, classes, social and cultural events in the late afternoon, evenings and weekends.

The following County departments will provide on-site services at the Family Support Center: Department of Public Social Services (DPSS); Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS); Department of Mental Health (DMH); Child Support Services Department (CSSD); and Department of Health Services (DHS).

Space has been set aside to enable some community-based providers to be housed on-site.

The Center will include a child care center.

Service Integration Design

Initial focus of integration efforts at the Center is on children and families receiving CalWORKs and child welfare services, with the recognition of the strong link that exists between poverty, abuse and potential involvement of families in DCFS.

In April 2005, DPSS and DCFS joined the Statewide *Child Welfare and CalWORKs Partnership Project*, also known as Linkages, that was designed by the California Center for Research on Women & Families' (CCRWF). The project is aimed at fostering practices to integrate child welfare and public assistance programs in California, and increasing prevention services.

Linkages planning efforts are being implemented in the SPA 2 North Hollywood DCFS and Burbank/East Valley DPSS offices, which will be co-located at the ESFV Family Support Center, as well as the DCFS Metro North Office and corresponding DPSS offices serving SPA 4.

Linkages is focusing on five opportunities for integration:

- Family Preservation Services for Welfare-to-Work Participants
- CalWORKs Family Reunification Services
- DCFS Screening for Potential Eligibility to DPSS Programs
- DPSS Screening for Child Protective Services (CPS) & Family Support Services (Homeless Project)
- Integration of DPSS Expertise into DCFS Team Decision Meeting.

In January 2006, integration planning will be expanded to include all departments to be housed at the facility.

Community Engagement

The project includes a community engagement process designed to engage the East San Fernando Valley (ESFV) community residents, service agencies, businesses, civic organizations and other public agencies in determining how the ESFV Family Support Center (FSC) can support localized efforts to improve the well-being of children and families.

The first phase of the community engagement process began in December 2005 and will be completed by April 2006, and will be linked to the SPA 2 and DCFS community engagement efforts currently underway. The first phase includes the following components:

- Establishing Public Partner Outreach and Buy-in
- Establishing Community Awareness and Buy-in
- Establishing Mechanisms for Ongoing Community Input and Participation in the Development of the Center

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