

A CALL TO ACTION

52% of our Community Safety Net will be Eliminated Further Jeopardizing Child Safety!

Recently the Department of Children and Family Services made the decision to **eliminate** funding to 52% of agencies currently serving children and families.

The Results:

- **Loss of Service to Thousands** of youth and families
- **Loss** of hundreds of Community Jobs
- **Loss** of Community Based Services
- **Destroys** Community Based Networks
- Allows larger agencies to **parachute** in the community and eliminate smaller community based-agencies.
- Given the ethnic make-up of our community, a disproportionate number of African-American, Latino and Faith-based agencies with a proven track record will be eliminated. (80% in SPA 6 and 60% County-wide) African-American Agencies, 60% Latino Agencies (SPA 6) and all Faith-based agencies (SPA 6) **will be eliminated**. Agencies that have successfully served the community for 18-20 years will be put out of business

The rules were changed how agencies were selected by those **“out-of-touch”** with our community. This decision to systematically eliminate our community safety-net through a flawed selection process **must not be allowed!**

THE RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES!

JOIN US IN THIS
CALL TO ACTION

A CALL TO ACTION

Tuesday, January 28th, 9:30 AM

LA County Hall of Administration

500 West Temple – Los Angeles 90012

STAND UP AND BE HEARD FOR OUR CHILDREN AND OUR COMMUNITY!

A CALL TO ACTION

52% of our Community Safety Net will be Eliminated Further Jeopardizing Child Safety!

Recently the Department of Children and Family Services through their SCSF RFP made the decision to eliminate funding to 52% of those agencies (County-wide) currently providing Family Preservation services. Over the past 20-years these agencies have built community networks, preserved thousands of families, reduced out-of-home placements, decreased child deaths and increased child safety. However, through a flawed RFP process, over half of the agencies that make up this community safety-net will be eliminated further jeopardizing child safety.

Impact on the Community:

- Thousands of youth and families will not be served due to a poorly thought through transition period. 52% of those Agencies currently providing service will have to begin the process of closing out their programs 3-4 months prior to the end of their contracts and will have to stop receiving referrals. Agencies that are closing facilities in communities that were required by the contract, will have to begin the process of equipment storage and/or liquidation, breaking lease agreements and negotiating staff layoffs. This coupled with a court injunction filed by the Union to reduce CSW caseloads and a 2-3 month new agency start-up period will only increase this number.
- Mass lay-offs with hundreds of community jobs lost.
- Given the ethnic make-up of our community, a disproportionate number of African-American, Latino and Faith-based agencies with proven success will be eliminated. In SPA 6, with the largest number of referrals, 80% of African-American Agencies, 60% of Latino Agencies and all Faith-based agencies will be eliminated. Agencies that have successfully served the community for 18-20 years will be put out of business due to a flawed RFP.
- **Loss** of Community Based Services
- **Destroys** Community Based Networks
- Allows larger agencies to **parachute** in the community and eliminate smaller community based-agencies requiring clients to receive service outside the community.

A Flawed Process:

1. There was *no base in evidence* for the RFP redesign, there was no consultation with the Regional Offices regarding agency recommendations, it eliminated both having a headquarters in the community and the site visit that brought community accountability. The RFP lacked institutional memory that created minority opportunity through community accountability and past success did not play a greater role (see below redesign to RFP).

| Family Preservation Evaluation - Then and Now | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Evaluation Criteria 1995 | Points | Evaluation Criteria 2013 | Points |
| Proposer's Staff Qualification | 5 | Proposer's Qualifications | 30 |
| Quality Control | 10 | Quality Assurance Plan | 10 |
| Plan for Providing Required Service | 30 | Proposer's Approach to Providing | 40 |
| Proposers Experience and Capability | 10 | Cost Proposal (see #7 below) | 20 |
| Site Visit Evaluation | 40 | | |

2. Evaluation documents and comments were shared/viewed with some proposers and not with others. The “Service Contract Solicitation Protest” policy states, “treat all proposers fairly and impartially.”¹
3. Among those agencies who were able to review evaluation documents, evaluation committee members did not always provide written comments to support their score or in some instances, did not provide a score that resulted in an incorrect average using the “informed averaging process”². One DCFS staff person conducting the debriefing admitted that was a problem.
4. One agency sent a written request for a copy of the “scores and notes made by the reviewers”. In a written response from DCFS, “we cannot provide copies of your scores or notes made by the evaluators at this time.” Two other agencies represented by an attorney requesting copies of debriefing and ranking summaries, copies of all evaluator comments with no response (exceeded the 10 day request). The “Service Contract Solicitation Protest” Policy states the Department should, “Begin to prepare proposals and evaluation for release pursuant to California Public Records Act requests and Brown Act requirements as soon as Notices of Intent to Request Proposed Contractor Selection Reviews are received.”³ DCFS has received those notices.
5. One agency added up the points of two identical proposals with a 7,000 point difference between the two proposals that reflected significant evaluator inconsistencies. The difference would have placed the agency as one of the winning proposals. Other agencies submitting multiple proposals reflected similar inconsistencies where 60% of the scores had a 50% variance.
6. Another SPA 6 agency received the highest PFF proposal score but was not recommended. While the cost proposal was weighted in the scoring, it contradicted the final recommendation. In other words, why weight a score that doesn’t matter? The person conducting the debriefing could not explain why.
7. Agencies completing contract negotiations have discovered the **Cost Proposal** had **no relevance**. DCFS is funding everyone the same in Family Preservation and not holding anyone to their bid resulting in an irrelevant score weighted at 20% in the proposal.
8. Agencies with larger budgets were given an unfair advantage over agencies with smaller budgets in scoring under “financial capability” with no points given under “financial ratios” to length of service that considered: in-kind donations in services, facilities, letters of support, transportation and volunteerism that reflect a 20-30% cost savings that attributed to overall program success including “differential response”.
9. The Protective Factors Framework and the Core Practice Model were requested in the Approach section per the RFP/SOW for Family Preservation, but were scored in the Background & Experience section in the rating tool. The areas reviewed and the percentage of points allocated to each criterion “**did not**” agree with the information listed in the RFP. *Significant scoring and weight differences reflect a scoring matrix flaw*. Responses in the Background and Experience section were weighted different than responses in the Approach section affecting the agencies score. Some questions were weighted at 300 points while others were weighted at 2,000 points with no clear justification.

¹ Los Angeles County “Services Contract Solicitation Protest”, page 12.

² The informed averaging process is used to calculate a composite score. However there were instances where scores were averaged by using an incorrect number of evaluators (i.e., two evaluators would give scores but the composite score was based on three evaluators).

³ Los Angeles County “Services Contract Solicitation Protest”, page 13.

10. In a meeting of the Children's Commission (11/18/13), the Director of DCFS responded to concerns regarding the SCSF RFP, "Before we went public, we met with each board office, individually and then met as a collective group with all the Board offices because Phillip (speaking third person) does not have the authority to sign each of these contracts. The Board makes the final decision."⁴ (**Concern:** This process of meeting individually and collectively with the Board offices to influence/lobby Board approval may have violated the Brown Act and compromised the appeal process).

Other Concerns:

1. What instrument was used to determine the weight of each score?
2. **Bias:** The standard for what is considered bias as one of the criteria for appeal is not clear. While DCFS will not give background on the evaluators, they do not tell you how bias can be established.
3. **Who are the reviewers:** Did the reviewers sign a document certifying they did not know the agency?

Of concern is the Departments decision to move forward with contract negotiations before completing the appeal process. With millions of dollars at stake, hundreds of community jobs lost, agencies being put out of business with a loss of service to thousands of youth further jeopardizing child safety, this decision to systematically eliminate 52% of the community safety-net through a flawed RFP will have a devastating impact on child safety and our community. As members of the community we strongly oppose the results of the DCFS Safe Children and Strong Families RFP and urge the County Board of Supervisors to reject the Departments recommendations and that existing contracts be maintained.

STANDING UP FOR OUR CHILDREN STANDING UP FOR OUR COMMUNITY

⁴ Children's Commission Meeting, 11/18/13 (Audio tape 26:40)