



Neighborhoods
For Kids
East County

Whatever it takes, until it takes, one kid at a time...

Neighborhoods for Kids - East County strives to keep abused and neglected children in safe, familiar placements and in their same school.

The County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency's East Region partnered with schools and other community groups to align child welfare service delivery with school boundaries. Child welfare staff work in 5 geographic clusters—creating opportunities to nurture relationships with school personnel, foster parents, service organizations, non-profit organizations, law enforcement, faith-based groups, and other public agencies.

These neighborhood-based relationships allow kids to remain in familiar environments—with relatives or family friends, or maintain same school enrollment.

All East County children reported to the Child Abuse Hotline, or who are dependents of the Juvenile Court, are served by Neighborhoods for Kids. Neighborhoods for Kids assesses risk and safety issues for 300 - 500 families each month. There are about 500 children who are dependents of the Juvenile Court in East County.

Promising Outcomes
Same School Enrollment—
61.6%
(national average 25%)
(Relative & Foster Placements)

Same School Enrollment—
59.0%
(Foster Placements Only)

High School Completion—
83%
(national average 50%)

Placement Stability—89.8%
(fewer than 3 placements
in a year; Target 86%)

Placement with Relatives—
68.9%

Annual Medical Exams—
87.5%
(target 90%)

Annual Dental Exams—83%
(target 70.1%)

FY 10-11 Totals

Framework to Improve Child Safety, Well-Being & Permanency

Define the Structure

- Child Welfare Services works best when services are delivered in a way that enhances *relationship building in neighborhoods*.
- A review of workload data and discussions with community partners and CWS customers will allow each CWS jurisdiction to create their own unique structural model that will make service delivery and relationship building more efficient.

Focus on Educational Achievement

- Healthy child development and learning are two basic needs for children.
- Children do best when education and child welfare service systems work together—the two systems working in concert can better protective outcomes for kids.
- By working closely with schools, Neighborhoods for Kids has been successful in keeping children in their same schools. Research indicates each educational move can set a child back 4 - 6 months in their academic progress.

Form Key Partnerships through Relationships

- Genuine relationships were formed with school personnel and caregivers (foster parents, extended family and friends); and nurtured with other strategic partners (community collaboratives, service organizations, non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, and other public agencies).

Outcome Focused/Data Driven Discussions

- Child Welfare Services seeks to ensure child safety, well-being and permanency.
- “Real time” trend data must be routinely gathered, analyzed and interpreted.
- Discussions about system-level performance ensure that positive outcomes are successfully achieved—use data to drive dialogue.

Unified Communications - The Power of Marketing

- Ensures agreement on focus and priorities; allows ability to coordinate diverse efforts; provides clear direction and keeps everyone on the same track
- Ensures cohesiveness and continuity of internal and external communications

Employee Engagement & Strengths-Based Management; Vision & Core Values

- Applied Gallup’s 4 keys of great management and 12 basic elements/needs all people have to be fulfilled at work; identified, grew and applied individual employee strengths.
- High levels of employee engagement lead to improved performance, increased productivity, better customer satisfaction, better retention, safer workplace
- Vision and core values: define a dream that moves the heart of those you lead; define beliefs that underpin what you are doing that will never change

Neighborhoods for Kids Vision:

All East County children are surrounded by familiar people and places that encourage them to thrive.