



Family to Family Times:

A Monthly Update on Implementation Activities for Family to Family

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Family to Family Philosophy:

Children are best served in their own homes whenever possible and in their own communities and neighborhoods when they must be removed from their homes.

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Special Thanks to our "Everyone is a Resource" Task Force:

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Welcome Nancy McHenry, new Executive Director of Foster/Adoptive/Resource Parent Resource Center

Mary Jane Retires: Best wishes to Mary Jane Smith, a true F2F pioneer

*County of Santa Clara Social Services Agency
Department of Family and Children's*

The Four Core Strategies

Santa Clara County is in its third year of developing a Family to Family approach to working with families and children in our child welfare system.

There are workgroups for each of the four core strategies of Family to Family:

- **Recruitment, Training and Support of Resource Families** supports children and families in their own neighborhoods by recruiting, training and supporting resource families within those neighborhoods.
- **Team Decision-Making** brings together social workers, community members and birth and resource families in all placement decisions to ensure a network of support for children.
- **Self-Evaluation** uses child and family outcome data to drive decision making and show where change is needed and progress has been made.
- **Community Partnership** in Santa Clara County is composed of five community action teams: Sunnyvale, South County, Mayfair (District Mary), African Ancestry and Asian/Pacific Islander.

The workgroups and community action teams have developed strategic plans for F2F implementation. Santa Clara County also has a team reviewing progress on joint response efforts with local law enforcement and another team using F2F strategies to reduce the overrepresentation of children of color in child welfare. Additionally, we are forming a new F2F Implementation Team, which will provide vision and oversight for all F2F components and activities. The Implementation Team will reflect the broader F2F community and will start meeting again in March, 2003.

Progress Report

This month we highlight successes in the first core strategy: **Recruitment, Training and Support of Resource Families.**

The "Everyone is a Resource" Celebration was a big success—three simultaneous events (Julian, Nuestra Casa, South County) showcasing the new Resource Family recruitment and support plan. The plan:

- Encourages resource families to partner with birth parents to enhance the likelihood of successful reunification;
- Identifies, assesses and supports relative caregivers;
- Uses Team Decision-Making (TDM) to ensure quick, strong placement decisions and community supports for those placements;
- Improves data flow regarding the placement needs of children;
- Works with new community partners to recruit and support resource families; and
- Encourages all agency staff to share responsibility for ongoing recruitment efforts.

Please join agency and community action team efforts to increase the number of suitable licensed resource homes in targeted communities. For a copy of the 21-page recruitment plan, email Jim Anderson at andersji@cws.

Next month's newsletter will provide updates on TDM and Self-Evaluation.

