

# BELIEVE

annual report 2008-2009



**SHIELDS**  
for families



*believing, building, becoming*





To accomplish great things  
we must not only act,  
but also dream;  
not only plan,  
but also  
**believe**

- Anatole France

that today is another chance

2 | shieldsforfamilies.org



to change someone's life





I **BELIEVE** IN FAMILY. I **BELIEVE** THAT EVERYONE DESERVES TO BE SURROUNDED WITH LOVE AND SUPPORT. I **BELIEVE** THAT PEOPLE SHOULD REMEMBER THEIR PAST, BUT LOOK TOWARD THEIR FUTURE. I **BELIEVE** EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE THE CHANCE TO ACHIEVE THEIR DREAMS. I **BELIEVE** THAT OUR STAFF MEMBERS ARE COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE AND TO HELPING FAMILIES HELP THEMSELVES. I **BELIEVE** THAT SHIELDS AND ITS PARTNERS ARE HELPING THE COMMUNITY GROW AND THRIVE.



# I BELIEVE

every new day is  
a new **opportunity.**

Twenty years ago, Xylina Bean, Norma Mtume and I founded SHIELDS for Families because we believed. We believed that a small group of people could help make South Los Angeles a better community for families and children. Today, as an organization, we continue to believe that the human spirit has infinite strength, and that families are stronger when they are together.

The families we serve also believe. They believe that they can be a nurturing parent, get an education or recover from addiction. Every successful journey at SHIELDS for Families begins with the words

# I BELIEVE.

*Kathryn S. Icenhower, PhD, LCSW*

Kathryn S. Icenhower, PH.D., LCSW

## OUR MISSION

To develop, deliver and evaluate culturally sensitive, comprehensive service models that empower and advocate for high risk families in South Los Angeles.

## OUR VISION

We believe in our families. That they can overcome whatever challenges they are facing, that they can build a foundation of hope and acquire the skills and support needed to accomplish their goals. We believe that they can become productive members of the community, nurturing parents, and achieve all their dreams.

## OUR GOALS

- Promote family reunification and support families remaining intact in the community
- Strengthen families through the provision of comprehensive and collaborative services
- Improve the general well being of families through comprehensive health programs and preventative social services
- Promote self sufficiency and economic independence

## SHIELDS is proud to be a member of the following organizations

- California Alcohol and Drug Program Executives, Inc.
- California Perinatal Treatment Network
- Child Welfare League of America
- National Coalition of Family Centered Treatment Directors
- Therapeutic Communities of America
- United Way



In 1987...

**P**hysicians at Martin Luther King Jr./Drew Medical Center delivered 1,200 infants exposed prenatally to drugs—an all-time annual high in Los Angeles and in our nation’s history. At the time, few had hope for these children. Even fewer had hope for their parents and families. There were no programs designed to serve the special needs of this population, and the future looked bleak.

Full of hope, three women banded together to put an end to this epidemic and founded SHIELDS for Families, Inc. in 1991. Although Kathryn Icenhower, Xylina Bean and Norma Mtume came from different backgrounds, they shared the belief that they could help shape the future. And they have.

Today, SHIELDS is a nationally and internationally recognized organization that offers award-winning programs in Los Angeles’ most challenged communities. The organization has grown to serve more than 5,000 families each year, employing more than 320 full-time staff, with an annual budget of more than \$21 million. SHIELDS operates 30 programs, including four collaborative networks in which SHIELDS serves as the lead agency.





**BELIEVE**

child abuse is  
preventable



## Child Welfare Services

**For more than 18 years,** SHIELDS has helped vulnerable children and families succeed. For families affected by the child welfare system, we provide a full continuum of services—from prevention to adoption. SHIELDS is a leader in the field; our work has deeply influenced Los Angeles' child welfare initiatives, policies and procedures. Whether it is protecting a child from harm or supporting a family struggling to stay together, our programs ensure that children grow up in safe, nurturing homes.

## We Believe in the Power of Families

A child's well-being is our highest priority. Because we believe in the power of families, we are there on the front lines when a family is in crisis.

Sometimes, all a family needs is a month's worth of groceries or help finding a job; other times, families in deep crisis are split apart. SHIELDS' wide range of services meet families' needs.

We know that child abuse is preventable. That is why our *ACT* (Achieving Change Together) *Program* is participating in the *Partnership for Families*, a county-wide child abuse prevention initiative funded by First 5 LA. We serve pregnant women and families with children ages 5 or younger who are at the highest risk of child neglect and abuse. These services include intensive case management, emergency food and clothing, medical care and job-placement assistance.

When the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) responds to a crisis, SHIELDS staff work directly with the county's emergency teams in our *Up-Front Assessments/Point of Engagement Program*. Our clinical staff assist in DCFS's assessment of the family home and offer immediate assistance to help keep families together. High-risk families can receive intensive case management, home visits and

other services to reduce the risk of abuse and out-of-home placements through our *Family Preservation Services*. Our *Family Support Program* serves 300 families referred by DCFS each year. Using a comprehensive, family-strength-based approach, case managers provide home visits and supportive services to strengthen families and prevent abuse.

When reunion with parents is impossible, SHIELDS supports the stability and healthy development of children and youth through *Adoption Promotion & Support services*. We offer individual and family therapy, mentoring, support groups and case management to ensure that children transition smoothly to loving, permanent care.

Because SHIELDS believes in the power of innovation and research, we partnered with DCFS and seven other service providers in South Los Angeles to test and evaluate strategies for preventing child abuse and neglect through the *Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project*. Our *ASK* (Ask, Seek, Knock) *Program* provides four Family Resource Centers located throughout South Los Angeles. Each center offers a continuum of services including linkages, support groups, legal services, educational classes, vocational training, job placement, community libraries and book clubs. Families referred from DCFS, as well as community residents, can access needed resources and services through any of the centers.





A close-up portrait of a young boy with a shaved head, smiling warmly at the camera. He is wearing a white collared shirt, a brown striped tie, and a brown V-neck sweater. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green foliage and a white structure.

**BELIEVE**

children can  
succeed



## Children & Youth Services

**SHIELDS knows the value** of investing in early childhood. The early years of life are among the most critical and most vulnerable for a child—a time when a child needs stability and family support. As a child enters school and adolescence, the challenges can often be overwhelming. We know that a successful family is a supported family, so we offer parents the education they need—and the support they deserve—to foster the success of their children. We start with children as young as 6 weeks in our child development centers and stay with them as they grow and learn in elementary, middle and high school.

## We Believe Healthy Children Start With Healthy Families

SHIELDS has four *Child Development Centers* that serve more than 160 children ages 0 to 5 annually. Children in our program have at least one parent attending our substance abuse treatment programs. In fact, SHIELDS is the only program in the United States that enrolls all children in services with their mother or father, ensuring that families remain intact and avoiding out-of-home placements. Children participate in activities that promote their social, emotional, cognitive, language, creative and physical development and ensure that they attain the skills necessary for entering kindergarten. Each child receives developmental screenings and assessments to ensure they receive the specialized attention they need, an Individual Education Plan, and intensive center- and home-based early childhood education services. Since a parent is a child's first teacher, SHIELDS' early childhood education specialists work hand-in-hand with parents to ensure they have the information and support they need to foster their child's development and education. Services include Mommy & Me classes, Daddy & Me classes, parenting classes and supervised interaction workshops.

South Los Angeles remains among the most disadvantaged and underserved communities in the nation, with an infant mortality rate 20% higher than the overall figure for the county. Our *Healthy Start Program* works to reduce infant mortality and morbidity, as well as disparities in health care in the area. We provide comprehensive, critically needed

services to 200 substance-abusing pregnant and postpartum women and their children annually. Women with children under 2 years old receive case management, health education, screening for perinatal depression, and inter-conceptional continuity of care.

Our After-school and Youth Services programs for children and youth ages 6 to 18 are designed to meet the needs of inner-city students. The hours immediately after school, between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., are when students are most likely to commit crimes or become the victims of crime. After-school programs have been proven to prevent violence in the community, reduce teen drug abuse and pregnancy, and improve school attendance. *Heros and Sheros programs* provide prevention and early intervention for students, including self-awareness, tutoring, mentoring, and social and recreational activities that help children succeed in school and in life.

SHIELDS is also a partner in multiple collaborative networks where we provide intensive case management for families with children 0-5. These include: *Best Babies, Ready for School* (2 networks), and the *Immunization Project*



Before SHIELDS I was experiencing a difficult time. I had ended an abusive relationship and was alone with my two children, no money and no job. Through SHIELDS, I took advantage of several classes and workshops. They provided play therapy for my son and domestic violence counseling just down the street from where I live. They also helped me pay my rent while I was getting back on my feet. Now I am attending college and employed as a clerical assistant at the college.

**Jackie**



A young boy with dark hair and a serene expression stands under a cascading waterfall. He is wearing a dark, patterned shirt. The water is splashing around him, creating a dynamic and refreshing scene. The word "BELIEVE" is overlaid in a bold, blue, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

**BELIEVE**



in healthy minds

## Mental Health Services

**At SHIELDS, we help build healthy minds,** bodies and souls. Poor mental health and poverty are inextricably linked: People living in poverty are more likely to suffer from poor mental health, and people with mental health problems are more likely to slide into poverty. And the number of children experiencing mental health problems—especially immigrant children—is on the rise. That is why we offer the community a comprehensive lineup of services in both English and Spanish that are certified by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

## For Children

SHIELDS' range of services for children begins with our *Therapeutic Nursery*. Our nursery serves 30 children ages 3 to 5 who are unable to attend preschool due to severe emotional and behavioral problems. In a structured setting, children participate in art and play therapy, story time and more. In the last year, more than 93% of the children in the program were able to transition to regular school settings.

Our *HUB Outpatient Mental Health Clinic* provides assessments, individualized therapy, and therapeutic and support groups to children ages 0 to 18 and their families who are under the supervision of DCFS. In 2009, we served 150 children and their families.

We also bring intensive counseling to elementary, middle and high schools. Located in 20 schools in the Los Angeles and Compton school districts, our *School-Based services* include assessments, evaluations, individual and group therapy, and medication support for students needing psychiatric services. In 2009, 250 students and their families received these services.

## For Youth

The teen years are especially risky for those growing up in poverty, and many youth in our area are already in trouble and on probation. SHIELDS provides two programs:

*Multi-Systemic Therapy*, an intensive in-home, evidence-based program, is provided to 60 Los Angeles County youth on probation; and *Functional Family Therapy* is offered to 156 youth who are on informal probation with the Los Angeles County Department of Probation. These programs successfully decrease delinquent behavior, increase pro-social interaction, and empower parents and caregivers to effectively handle issues that arise. We also offer *Revelation*, an intensive outpatient program that provides services to youth ages 13 to 21 who present co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders. In 2009, 70 youth participated in this program.

## For Families

To strengthen families and address underlying mental health issues, SHIELDS has a range of programs for adults and families. *Eden*, our full-time treatment program, offers mental health services and substance abuse treatment to women with a dual diagnosis and their children. *CalWORKS Mental Health* provides outpatient services for participants with mental health barriers to employment. *CalWORKS Homeless Families* assists those who are homeless or at-risk for being homeless by developing skills needed to sustain permanent independent housing. *GROW* offers outpatient services to General-Relief recipients whose mental health is a barrier to employment.





A close-up portrait of a young woman with curly, light brown hair and numerous freckles across her face. She is looking directly at the camera with a slight, hopeful smile. The lighting is soft and warm, highlighting her features. The background is dark and out of focus.

**BELIEVE**

addiction can be  
**conquered**

## Substance Abuse

**Successful, long-term recovery** is the goal of our Substance-abuse Services and allows our clients to live full and productive lives. We offer nationally recognized prevention, treatment and recovery services to a variety of clients, including women and their families, women and adolescents with co-occurring disorders, monolingual Spanish-speaking clients, and Drug Court referred clients. Programs include outpatient, day treatment, and non-traditional residential services. Because the well-being of children and a united family are our top priorities, *we are the only organization in the nation that provides treatment services to the entire family, including housing and program services.*

## Perinatal Substance-abuse Treatment

Our Perinatal Substance-abuse Programs are the cornerstone of our agency. In each one, we offer families a comprehensive array of support, including child development, youth services, case management, vocational services, housing and transportation. Programs include:

*Genesis*, started in 1990 in partnership with Martin Luther King Hospital, Genesis serves 45 families through a day-treatment program. Last year, more than 70% of the participants completed all phases of the program—more than double the national average.

The *Exodus* program serves 45 families at a time in a family-centered therapeutic community. The entire family lives in apartments owned and managed by SHIELDS. This unique model is the only program in the United States that allows the entire family to enroll in services. In the last five years, more than 83% of the participants completed all phases of the program—nearly four times the national average.

Building on the success of the Exodus program, *Tamar Village* is designed for women leaving the correction system who also have children involved with child protective services. SHIELDS provides comprehensive services to a capacity of 30 families in partnership with DCFS, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and the Public Defender's Office.

## Co-Occurring Programs

The *Eden* Program is an intensive day-treatment program for women with a dual-diagnosis and

their children. Services are provided daily and include an on-site child development center. Up to 30 families are enrolled in the program at one time; completion rates averaging more than 60%.

Our *Revelation* Program is an intensive outpatient program that provides services to youth ages 13 to 21 who present with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders. In 2008–2009, more than 70 youth participated in this program.

## Outpatient Services

The *Ark* Program, our outpatient program serves clients through an intensive treatment model. Services include counseling, life skills, education and vocational services, health education, parenting, mental health and relapse prevention. Last year, more than 70% of the participants completed all phases of the program—more than double the national average.

## Community Assessment Services Center (CASC)

SHIELDS conducts assessments for mental health and substance abuse, as well as linkage to services. We also have assessors located at the Compton Superior Court, Edelman Juvenile Dependency Court, and Kenyon Juvenile Court. Monthly, an average of 150 assessments are conducted.

Lifetime *Aftercare* services are provided to all program graduates. Services include counseling, case management, support groups, advocacy and leadership training, access to job placement and housing services, as well as social activities.





I came to SHIELDS in 2000. I was addicted to heroin and the worst part was that my addiction took many things from me. The most important thing it took was my self-respect. I lost contact with my daughter and was losing the trust of my family. Since I came [ to SHIELDS ] I have had the chance to change my life. I have earned my High School diploma, taken college classes, and been able to get my certification as an addiction counselor. I now feel that there is nothing that I can't get through, because I know that I no longer have to run from life. For this I can only give my thanks to SHIELDS for Families.

**Miguel Rodriguez**



**BELIEVE**



# in new beginnings

## Supportive Services

**The families we serve** face complex challenges in life, none of which can be addressed without focusing on their basic needs. In our program, 95% of families live below the federal poverty level, making food, clothing and shelter luxuries they struggle to afford. Whether it is a hot meal or a place to sleep for the week, we offer immediate relief to struggling families. The road to self-sufficiency is never easy, so SHIELDS stands by parents to ensure they have what they need to create nurturing homes for their children. Each day, we see families make heroic strides toward success, and we are proud to be a part of their journey.



## Housing, Transportation and Food Services

SHIELDS operates 126 units of low-income housing for families enrolled in SHIELDS services. Meeting a critical need in the community, each housing complex consistently runs at full capacity. Our housing programs are:

**Keith Village** – an 86-unit apartment complex in Compton. Keith Village is an oasis for families in need, featuring a community center, two playgrounds and a laundry facility. It is also home to our Exodus program.

**Naomi Village & Saraii Village** – two 20-unit complexes in Compton and Los Angeles. These complexes provide housing for substance-abusing families in treatment.

**Our fleet of 20 vans** transport families to SHIELDS programs and other services. In addition, we operate a food bank and provide dry and canned food, and motel vouchers to families in need.

## Vocational and Educational Services

SHIELDS programs help families acquire the skills they need to become employable and independent. Our vocational and educational services assist clients in completing their high school diplomas, computer training, job readiness, and certificated training programs, as well as job placement.

Since 1996, more than 450 participants have received high school diplomas, over 800 were provided computer classes, and more than 700 individuals found employment in jobs paying above minimum wage.

Each Year,

approximately

**250**

homeless families

are provided

with housing,

**196,947**

hot meals are

served, and


**150**

individuals

become

gainfully

employed.



196,947  
**Hot Meals**  
served each year

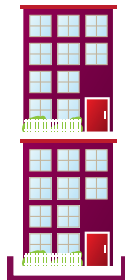
Low Income  
**Housing**  
126 Units Total



**Keith Village**  
86 Units

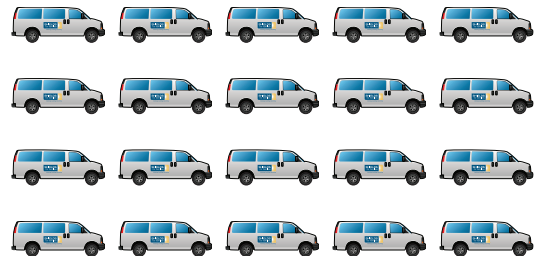


**Naomi Village**  
20 Units



**Saraii Village**  
20 Units

Transportation  
**Fleet**



20 Vans



dreams should be embraced

**BELIEVE**



## What's New

**We have an unwavering commitment** to provide the highest quality care to our children and families. That means anticipating the needs of those we serve, knowing the difference between progress and change and looking toward the future without forgetting the lessons of our past. This year was full of innovation, progress and change. A new home and a new look are just the beginning. Read on to learn how SHIELDS for Families continues to embrace dreams and broaden horizons.



## shieldsforfamilies.org

Keep an eye out over the next few months for a whole new way to interact with SHIELDS.

### Staff

Ten SHIELDS staff members will be the first to earn their master's degrees in social work in May 2010 through an innovative partnership between SHIELDS and Cal State Dominguez Hills. Because the program is held on-site at SHIELDS, the staff are able to maintain full-time employment while completing challenging coursework. With their master's degrees, they will be delivering crucially needed mental health therapy in their community.

### Home At Last!

SHIELDS for Families moved into its first permanent home ever this year. Our new headquarters building is 23,000 square feet on 1.8 acres of land. The new building allows us to house all our administrative staff at the same location. The building also has a large training room, and we are able to host events such as back-to-school fairs and community Thanksgiving dinners at the site.

## ASK

When families ask for assistance, they can receive it from our new program, ASK: Ask, Seek, Knock. ASK is a collaborative effort to help prevent child abuse and neglect before it occurs, with the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and five partner organizations. The program operates at four locations in South Los Angeles, known as ASK Centers. Families can drop by an ASK Center or be referred by another organization for help with housing, food, legal services, counseling, education or employment. When things go wrong in these areas, family stress levels often rise, increasing the risk for child maltreatment.

The ASK Centers are staffed by caring, bilingual "navigators," who help families steer their way through the system to get the services they need. At the centers, parents can join support groups, receive vocational training, participate in health education and much more. In just nine months, ASK grew to assist more than 500 families per month. Participants logged nearly 22,000 hours as students in vocational and educational classes. The 150 people who completed certificate programs are all employed. ASK is a vital addition to SHIELDS' comprehensive family services.



## Did You Notice Something Different About The Way We Look?

This is not a trick question. You may have spotted the new SHIELDS logo. The blue and gold colors are balanced and optimistic. The sun rays on the right side are a shield to protect families. As you follow the rays from top to bottom, the cycle represents hope, rebirth and a bright future. As the logo says, SHIELDS is always believing, building and becoming.







# 2009

## **James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award**

In June 2009, Kathryn Icenhower received the prestigious James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award. The award highlights and supports the work of individuals who are advancing innovative and effective solutions to significant state issues. Nominated by California Assembly Speaker Karen Bass, Kathy was recognized for her insights and effectiveness in keeping families in Los Angeles together and helping children grow up in healthier environments.

SHIELDS thanks the James Irvine Foundation for this incredible honor and salutes all of the recipients of the 2009 James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award, including Josefina Alvarado Mena, Tim Dang, Luis Santana, Richard Valle and Jennifer Vanica.

## 2008-2009 Financials

### Revenue

Government Contracts .....	\$18,700,405.00
Individuals .....	\$27,553.00
Corporations & Foundations .....	\$375,900.00
Other (Non-Governmental) .....	\$460,213.00
In-Kind Contributions .....	\$477,484.00
United Way .....	\$26,292.00
Client & Program Fees .....	\$401,202.00
<b>Total Revenue .....</b>	<b>\$20,469,049.00</b>

### Expenses

Programs	Program	Administrative	Total
Child and Youth	\$1,253,432.00	\$193,508.00	\$1,446,940.00
Family Services	\$4,012,982.00	\$359,584.00	\$4,372,566.00
Mental Health	\$6,499,771.00	\$1,175,068.00	\$7,674,839.00
Substance Abuse	\$4,935,951.00	\$716,626.00	\$5,652,577.00
Client Supportive	\$853,259.00	\$17,647.00	\$870,906.00
Admin General		\$40,779.00	\$40,779.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$17,555,395.00</b>	<b>\$2,503,212.00</b>	<b>\$20,058,607.00</b>
	<b>[ 87.52% ]</b>	<b>[ 12.48% ]</b>	

# Donors

## Private Sources

We thank the following donors for their generous support of \$2,500 and above.

- Marguerite Casey Foundation
- Durfee Foundation
- Orange County Community Foundation
- Majestic Realty Foundation
- Ralph M. Parsons
- Ace Cash Express
- Realty Associate Advisors

## Public Sources

- City of Los Angeles Community Development Department
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Emergency Food and Shelter Program
- First 5 Los Angeles
- Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services
- Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Alcohol and Drug Program Administration

- Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

# Leadership

## Board of Directors

- Gerald Phillips .....Chairperson
- Xylina Bean, M.D.....President
- Kerry English, M.D.....Vice-Chair
- Bunny Withers.....Secretary
- Susan Burton, Ph.D.....Treasurer
- Gussie Schlegel / Lou Orr
- Charlotte Burnett / Jeffrie Miller, M.D.

## Executive Management Team

- Kathryn S. Icenhower, .....Executive Director  
Ph.D, LCSW
- Norma Mtume, MA .....Associate Director/  
Chief Financial Officer
- Sara Tienda, MSW .....Assistant Director
- Charlene K. Smith, MA.....Director of Child  
Development Services
- Darnell Bell, MA.....Director of Training and Research



# BELIEVE

You can help us  
change lives.

SHIELDS for Families has been winning the battle against poverty and substance abuse since 1991. A leader in the child welfare and substance abuse fields, our programs change and save lives.

But we can't do it alone. We need your help. By supporting SHIELDS for Families, you will help ensure that children have the best start in life and families have the support they need to succeed.

Give the gift of hope today.

Visit [www.shieldsforfamilies.org](http://www.shieldsforfamilies.org)

or call **(323) 242-5000**

to make your gift today.



We would like to thank our  
collaborative partners for  
helping us serve our clients.

**MAILING ADDRESS:**

P.O. Box 59129  
Los Angeles, California 90059

**main OFFICES:**

11601 South Western Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90047-5006

Phone: 323.242.5000

Fax: 323.242.5011

[admindept@shieldsforfamilies.org](mailto:admindept@shieldsforfamilies.org)

[www.shieldsforfamilies.org](http://www.shieldsforfamilies.org)

**ANNUAL REPORT CREDITS**

**Copy, Design & Illustrations:**

QuantumMethod  
([www.nonprofit.quantummethod.com](http://www.nonprofit.quantummethod.com))

**Photography:**

Ellice Schwartz, ES Photography ([www.es-photo.net](http://www.es-photo.net))  
iStockphoto

**JIF Award Illustration:**

Nicholas Wilton



We believe that, with education, access to appropriate services, and caring guidance, families can rebuild their lives and become productive members of the community, nurturing parents, and achieve their dreams.

