



believing
building
becoming

hope

SHIELDS FOR FAMILIES
2007 - 2008 ANNUAL REPORT



hope is the belief that every child will enter this world healthy and be embraced by a nurturing family.

hope is the belief that every family will provide a lifetime of unconditional love and protection for their children.

hope is the belief that every at-risk child and family will have access to the tools they need to succeed, including education, adequate housing, health care, nutrition, and support.

hope is the belief that the human spirit can overcome the most difficult life challenges, including poverty and addiction, and prevail in the face of adversity.

hope changes lives.

hope is **SHIELDS for Families**



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Leadership

👉 Message from the Executive Director



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Children & Youth Services

👉 More than 160 children attended our Child Development Centers and received a high-quality preschool education

👉 More than 170 children and youth attended our after-school programs



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About Us

👉 SHIELDS was founded in 1991 in response to staggering numbers of babies born prenatally exposed to drugs

👉 SHIELDS served more than 3,000 families and their children this year



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Mental Health Services

👉 This year, more than 690 clients and their families received individual, group, or family counseling

👉 We treated over 100 women suffering from addiction and a psychiatric illness



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Child Welfare Services

👉 More than 1,600 vulnerable children were protected from harm this year

👉 Our Family Support Program served more than 300 families in 2007-2008

👉 More than 1,000 children remained in their homes instead of going to foster care



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Substance Abuse Services

👉 More than 2,000 clients and their families are on the road to recovery and a life free of addiction thanks to our treatment programs

👉 SHIELDS is the only program in the nation that provides treatment services to the entire family, including housing and program services



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Support Services

- 👉 More than 550 people received food, clothing and shelter this year
- 👉 Our 16 vans transported families to critically-needed services in the community



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Donors

- 👉 We are grateful to our generous donors who make our important work possible



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The Heart and Soul of SHIELDS

- 👉 Kathy Icenhower, Norma Stoker-Mtume and Xylina Bean formed SHIELDS in 1991
- 👉 100% of the founding leadership team is still in place at SHIELDS today



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Management & Board Lists



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Financials

- 👉 SHIELDS operates with lean and efficient budgets and consistently clean financial audits
- 👉 We effectively manage more than 40 government contracts, totaling \$21 million



Sharing a moment with Kathryn S. Icenhower, Ph.D, Executive Director of SHIELDS for Families

On a rainy day in 1990, inspiration came to Kathy Icenhower in the most unlikely of places – in a makeshift office in a South Los Angeles parking lot. The office, a trailer riddled with holes from floor to ceiling, offered little shelter from the storm. In with the rain, however, poured inspiration. Working in the Los Angeles County Drug Abuse office, each day brought Kathy in contact with mothers losing their battle with addiction; she visited their newborn babies in the NICU, struggling for life and a fair beginning; she dreamed of a day when families could beat addictions and children were not born prenatally exposed to drugs. With her office crumbling around her, Kathy realized that hope was all she needed to build a brighter future for the children and families of South Los Angeles.

We sat down with Kathy to talk about that fateful day and how a humble office was fertile ground for hope and the solid foundation for SHIELDS for Families.

1. What role did hope play in founding SHIELDS?

Eighteen years ago, I was moved by the staggering number of babies born prenatally exposed to drugs and the realization that there were no services available to help. I had a dream to start a program that could help people change their lives. I didn't have much to start with. No staff. No clients. But I did have hope. With the help of Xylina Bean and Norma Mturne, we transformed that trailer into a center. The hope we shared filled our center with families looking for help, seeking us out because they wanted to make a change in their lives and they had heard that we could help. That hope has remained at the core of SHIELDS.

2. What does the name SHIELDS for Families mean?

We provide a safety net of programs and supportive services that protect – or “shield” – children and families from negative factors.

3. What client best exemplifies SHIELDS' ability to help and support children and families?

Brenda was found by our social workers sleeping in the park with two of her seven children. Brenda was addicted to methamphetamines and had hit rock bottom. The remaining five children were in foster care. Our staff recommended our Exodus program to her and she excelled in treatment. Within four months, she had all seven of the children back in her custody. Her children thrived in our programs, making the honor roll and sports teams. During the program, Brenda received her high school diploma and began taking college classes. She found a home large enough for her entire family and completed her associate's degree. Brenda now has her bachelor's degree and is the program coordinator at a local drug treatment program. We are so proud of all of her accomplishments and enjoy hearing from her on a regular basis.

4. Tell me about the significance of your motto, “believing, building, becoming.”

Our motto embodies the essence of SHIELDS' philosophy . . . 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 . . . and they can become productive members of the community, nurturing parents, and achieve all their dreams.

5. If you could wave a magic wand and change three things for children and families in Los Angeles today, what would they be?

First, I would use the magic wand to provide for equal opportunities for all children and families, to ensure that everyone had access to quality education, affordable housing, health care and job opportunities. Secondly, I would eliminate discrimination based on the color of someone's skin, their gender, their sexual orientation, or their socioeconomic status. For my third change, I would ensure that all families were offered the support they need to provide a safe and nurturing home for their children.





In 1987, Martin Luther King Drew Hospital delivered 1,200 infants exposed prenatally to drugs – an all-time 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 created SHIELDS for Families, Inc. 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 3,000 families each year, employing more than 320 full-time employees, with an annual budget of more than \$21 million. SHIELDS operates 30 programs, including four collaborative networks where SHIELDS acts as the lead agency.

Los Angeles is a better place because of SHIELDS.



OUR TRACK RECORD

We are proud to serve the community and honored by the recognition we have received for the groundbreaking outcomes of our programs.



- 👉 **SHIELDS** programs have received multiple awards and recognition for their successful outcomes, including the C. Everett Koop Award, the International Athena Award and special recognition from the Office of National Drug Control Policy.
- 👉 **SHIELDS** programs are cited as best-practice models for women and children by the California State Legislature, the California State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, the Children's Defense Fund, the California Institute of Mental Health, the Abandoned Infants Association, and the National Health Policy Institute.
- 👉 **SHIELDS** is recognized in special reports by the Washington Health Foundation, the National Economic Development and Law Center, the Little Hoover Commission and the Rockefeller Foundation for our innovative and effective models of service.
- 👉 **SHIELDS** has a partnership with Cal State University, Dominguez Hills, Master of Social Work (MSW) program to provide an accelerated MSW degree for our employees, many of whom are from the South Los Angeles communities we serve.
- 👉 **SHIELDS'** work has been featured in the *Los Angeles Times*, as well as in the CBS series "Kate Brasher," the news shows "Life Moments" and "48 Hours," and through other local news and television coverage, including CNN.



child welfare services

For more than 15 years, SHIELDS has helped vulnerable children and families succeed. We provide a full continuum of services for families impacted by the child welfare system — from prevention to adoption. SHIELDS is a leader in the field; our work has deeply impacted 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 and nurturing homes.

A child's well being is our highest priority.

At SHIELDS, we know that a child's first years are critical to their success in school and beyond. Because we believe in the power of families, we are there, on the frontline, 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, from alleviating the stresses of day-to-day life in poverty, to assisting with monthly rent.

We know that child abuse is preventable. That is why we are participating in the **Partnership for Families**, a county-wide child abuse prevention initiative funded by First 5 Los Angeles. We serve pregnant women and families with children five years or younger 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 works directly with the County's emergency teams in our **Up-Front Assessments/Point of Engagement Program**. In 2007-2008 our clinical staff assisted DCFS in the assessment of over 400 family homes, and were present to offer immediate assistance and long-term programs to help keep families together. High-risk families are offered 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 over 300 families referred by DCFS each year. Using a comprehensive, family-strength-based approach, case managers provide home visits and supportive services to ensure that families are strengthened and abuse prevented. Families in need of intensive services also benefit from our **Alternative Response Program** — a program that helps lower-risk families stay together by strengthening families and promoting a safe and nurturing environment.

If children must be separated from their parents' care, SHIELDS is there to ensure that children are provided with caring placements and supportive services in our **Adoption Promotion and Support Services Program**. SHIELDS provides comprehensive assessments and linkages to resources for children who are in adoptive and legal guardianship homes.



1,900

The average number of child abuse and neglect reports filed each month within SHIELDS' service area



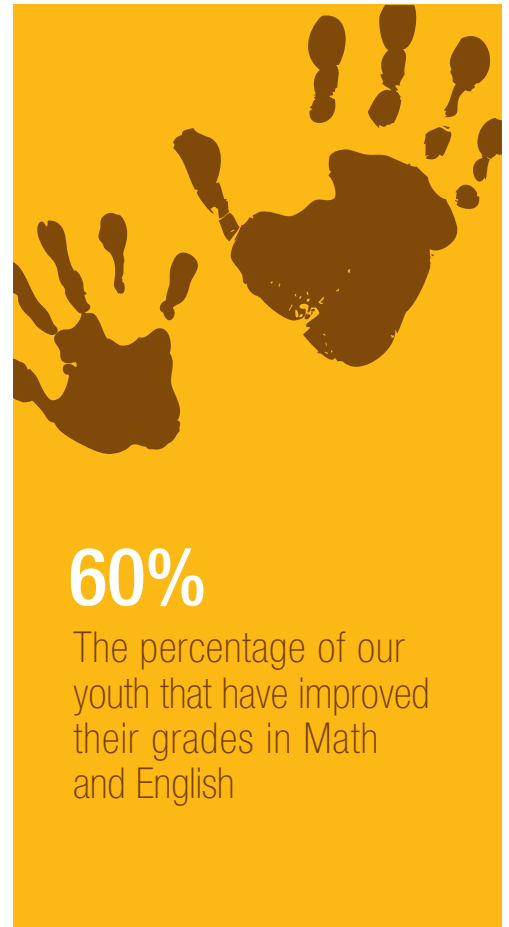
SHIELDS knows the value of investing in early childhood. The early years of life are among the most critical and the most vulnerable time for a child – a time when a child needs stability and family support. As a child enters school and adolescence, the challenges can often be overwhelming. We know that 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 six weeks of age in our Child Development Centers and stay with them as they grow and learn in elementary, middle, and high school.

Child Development Centers

SHIELDS has four Child Development Centers that serve a total of 160 children ages 0-5. 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 and/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 to be ready to enter 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. As 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 skills they need to support their child's development and education. Services include Mommy, Daddy & Me and parenting classes, as well as supervised early intervention education.

South Los Angeles remains among the most disadvantaged and under served 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 infant morbidity, as well as disparities in health care in the area. A critically-needed service, we provide comprehensive services to 200 substance-abusing pregnant and postpartum women and their children annually. Women with children under two years of age receive outreach, case management, health education, screening for perinatal depression, and interconceptional continuity of care.

Our **After-school and Youth Services** programs for children and youth (ages 6-18) are designed to meet the needs of inner-city students. The hours immediately after school, between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m., are when students are most likely to commit crimes or become the victims of crime. After-school programs prevent violence in the community, reduce teen drug abuse and pregnancy, and improve school attendance. **Heros** and **Sheros** Programs provide prevention and early intervention services for students that include self awareness, tutoring, mentoring, and social and recreational activities that help children succeed in school and in life.





At SHIELDS, we help build healthy minds, bodies, and souls. Poor mental health and poverty are inextricably linked, as 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 a comprehensive lineup of services to the community, with all services offered in both English and Spanish and certified by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health.

For Children

Our **Therapeutic Nursery** serves 30 children ages 3-5 who are unable to attend preschool due to severe emotional and behavioral challenges. In a structured setting, children participate in activities, including art and play therapy. Our professionals work with parents to increase bonding and positive parenting. In the last year, more than 93% of the children 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 0-18 and their families who are under the supervision of DCFS. In 2007-2008, we served 205 children and families.

We also bring intensive counseling to elementary, middle, and high school campuses in our **School-Based Mental Health Program**. Located in 20 schools in Los Angeles and Compton Unified School Districts, we work with students identified with emotional or behavioral concerns, as well as those who have experienced traumatic events. In 2007-2008, 205 students received these services.

For Youth

The teen years are especially risky 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, provided to 60 youth on probation; and **Functional Family Therapy**, offered to 156 youth who are on informal probation with the L.A. County Department of Probation. These programs successfully decrease delinquent behavior and empower parents to effectively support their children.

We also offer **Revelation**, an intensive outpatient program that provides services to youth ages 13-21 who present with co-occurring substance abuse and mental health disorders. In 2007-2008, 70 youth and their families participated together in this program.

For Families

To strengthen families and address mental health issues, SHIELDS offers a range of programs to adults and families. **Eden**, a co-occurring program, offers mental health services and substance abuse treatment to women and their children. **CALWorks Mental Health** provides outpatient services for participants with mental health barriers to employment. **CALWorks Homeless Families Program** assists those who are homeless or at risk for being homeless by helping develop skills needed to sustain permanent independent housing. **GROW** offers services to general relief recipients whose mental health is a barrier to employment.



21%

The percentage of U.S. children that show symptoms of a mental disorder during the course of a year



substance abuse services

Successful, long-term recovery is the cornerstone 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, men, and adolescents with co-occurring disorders, monolingual Spanish speaking clients, Drug Court and Proposition 36-referred clients. Programs include outpatient, day treatment, and residential services. As the well-being of children and a united family is our top priority, we are the only organization in the nation that provides treatment services to the entire family, including housing and program services.

Perinatal Substance Abuse Division

Our **Perinatal Substance Abuse Division** is the foundation of our recovery programs. The staggering number of babies born exposed to drugs in the late 1980s was the motivation for starting SHIELDS. Each of our programs offers families a comprehensive array of support, including child development, youth services, case management, vocational services, housing, and transportation. Programs include:

👋 **Genesis**, the founding program of SHIELDS, started in 1990 in partnership with Martin Luther King Hospital. Offered in both English and Spanish to clients with a moderate level of substance abuse, Genesis serves 45 families in a day treatment program. Last year, more than 80% of the participants completed all phases of the program – more than three times the national average.


👋 **The Exodus program** serves 45 families in a family-centered therapeutic community. The entire family lives in an apartment community owned and managed by SHIELDS. This unique model, which serves homeless clients with a long history of substance abuse, is the **only program in the United States** that allows the entire family to live and participate in treatment together. In the last five years, more than 81.2% of the participants completed – nearly four times the national average.

👋 **Tamar Village** began in October 2007, growing out of the success of the Exodus program. This new residential treatment program is designed for women leaving the jail system and provides long-term comprehensive services to 30 families at a time.

Outpatient Division – The Ark Program

Our outpatient programs serve clients through an intensive treatment model. Clients can attend day or evening programs, with services offered in English and Spanish. Additionally, we have staff located in the Compton Superior Court, Edelman Juvenile Dependency Court, and Kenyon Probation Court. Many of the clients in our **Compton Drug Court** and **Proposition 36 Program** have drug charges pending and face jail time if they do not complete our program. Last year, more than 70% of the participants completed all phases of the program – almost triple the national average.

Lifetime Aftercare services are provided to all program graduates, including case management, support groups, advocacy and leadership training, job placement and housing services.



22 Million
The number of people
affected by chronic but
treatable addiction
nationwide



supportive services

The families we serve face complex challenges in life, none of which can be addressed without starting with their basic needs. Ninety-five percent of the families enrolled in our program 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, 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 family and 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. Residents receive substance abuse and mental health services, intensive case management, vocational support, and life skills training — making it much more than just a home. Meeting a critical need in the community, each complex consistently runs at full capacity. Our housing programs include:

👉 **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 Family Day Treatment Program, one of our Child Development Centers, and our youth program.

👉 **Naomi Village & Saraii Village** — two 20-unit complexes in Compton and Los Angeles. These complexes provide housing for substance abusing and mentally ill individuals and families.

👉 **Success House** — the most recent addition to our housing program. This spacious duplex houses 10 Ark Program male participants.

Our fleet of vans transports families to SHIELDS programs and other needed services in the community. In addition, we operate a food bank and provide hot food, 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 of government assistance. Our vocational and educational services assist clients with completion of their high school diplomas, and provide computer training, job readiness, and certificated training programs, as well as job placement.

Since 1996, SHIELDS has assisted more than 250 clients receive high school diplomas. We have provided computer literacy classes to more than 400 clients, and found employment for over 500 individuals in jobs that pay above minimum wage, with an average salary of \$10 - \$12 per hour. Job training is provided in specific areas of interest for clients and has resulted in the following certifications: Fiber-Optic Technology, Business Office Communications, and Medical Billing.



196,000

The number of hot meals
SHIELDS' provides to the
community each year



The Founders & Executive Management Team

From left to right: **Charlene K. Smith, MA**, *Director of Child Development Services*, **Kathryn S. Icenhower, PhD, LCSW**, *Executive Director*, **Darnell Bell, MA**, *Director of Training and Research*, **Norma Mtume, MA**, *Associate Director and Chief Financial Officer*, **Sara Tienda, MSW**, *Assistant Director*

The Founders & Executive Management Team of SHIELDS for Families

Behind every successful organization are the people who won't settle for anything less. Kathy Icenhower, Norma Stoker-Mtume, and Xylina Bean harnessed this indomitable spirit when they formed SHIELDS in 1991. These women embody the heart and soul of the organization. When most had turned their backs on the South Los Angeles community, they defied the odds and created an organization that changes lives.

Today, the executive management team of SHIELDS continues to break the mold. In an age where the average turnover rate among nonprofit employers is 21% and employee retention is a common problem, 100% of the original management team is still in place and going strong. They credit their success as a team to their shared vision, a commitment to the organization's mission, and a passion for helping children and families.

In Focus: Norma Stoker-Mtume

Norma Stoker-Mtume, associate director and chief financial officer of SHIELDS, has dedicated her life to making Los Angeles a better place. The Durfee Foundation, a foundation that rewards creativity and risk taking, recently recognized Norma's expertise in the field with the Stanton Fellowship, a prestigious award that allows a select group of professionals to address intractable problems in their field, and to develop solutions that will improve life for the people of Los Angeles. Concerned with the graying leadership in the nonprofit sector, Norma's fellowship allowed her to research and develop the *Young Executives Mentoring and Coaching Institute* to train future nonprofit executives.



SUCCESS
STORY

"I came to SHIELDS 11 ½ years ago, busted, broke down. I felt worthless, hopeless and was addicted to crack cocaine. I lost my children, my home, and my dignity. With nowhere to turn, I wanted to end my life. Through SHIELDS I have gained my dignity, self worth and children back into my life. I am a graduate student, employable, and happy with my children in my life. My future is bright because of SHIELDS. I am forever grateful."

--Anita Hall



250

The number per year that substance exposed births in our area has dropped to from more than 1,000



2008 financial review

Fiscal 2007-2008 Financials

REVENUE

Government Contracts	\$17,421,486	
Individuals	20,305	
Corporations & Foundations	133,128	
In-kind Contributions	260,814	
United Way	19,560	
Client Fees & Program Fees	259,458	

TOTAL REVENUE	\$18,114,751	
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EXPENSES

Program Services

Mental Health	\$6,158,234	
Substance Abuse	3,994,652	
Family Services	3,152,995	
Child and Youth	1,498,749	
Supportive Services	1,058,627	
Subtotal Program Service	15,863,257	87.02%

General and Administrative	2,350,114	12.89%
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Fundraising	15,600	.09%
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TOTAL EXPENSES	\$18,228,971	
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NOTE: At SHIELDS for Families, our employees are our most valuable resource. We strive to offer employees the most comprehensive and competitive benefits package possible. In an effort to attract and retain the highest-quality staff, SHIELDS made a midyear enhancement to our employee benefit package by increasing vacation accrual maximums during fiscal year 2007-2008. This enhancement, which increased our vacation accrual, impacted our bottom line by (\$114,220).

our donors



Private Sources

Marguerite Casey Foundation

Durfee Foundation

The Green Foundation

Stuart Foundation

Ralph M. Parsons Foundation

United Way

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

U.S. Housing and Urban Development Administration

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 or call (323) 242-5000 to make your gift today.

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



Board of Directors

Jeffrie Miller, M.D.....Chairperson
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Executive Management Team

Kathryn S. Icenhower, Ph.D, LCSW.....Executive Director
Norma Mtume, MA.....Associate Director and 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

OUR MISSION To develop, deliver and evaluate culturally sensitive, comprehensive service models that empower and advocate for high-risk families.

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 . . . and they can become productive members of the community, nurturing parents, and achieve all of 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
National Humane Society
Therapeutic Communities of America
United Way





hope

is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul

And sings the tune without the words,
And never stops -- at all

- *Emily Dickinson*

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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 all of their dreams.



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