

**Children's Justice Initiative  
Alcohol and Other Drug Project  
Parent Partner Consultant**

**Research Report  
Parent Mentor/Leader Models**

**Prepared and submitted by  
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## **Introduction**

The following is a report of findings from research regarding the incorporation of parent mentors or leaders in the recovery process of families involved in child welfare, the juvenile courts and alcohol and other drug treatment. The research includes information about the operation (role of parent leader, training, recruitment, funding and resources) of parent support programs that are currently being developed and used.

The research was done by gathering information from the internet, written publications and reports, and from conversations with those involved in the programs. Below is a list of the ten resources of parent to parent support programs that are discussed in this report.

- Sacramento County Shared Leadership Task Force
- Kern County, California, Parent Leaders
- Santa Clara County Mentors for Moms Programs
- Lake County, Minnesota, Human Services Department, Experimental mentor program
- Reno, Nevada, Foster Grandparents Program
- Illinois Department of Human Services IV-E Demonstration, Recovery Coaches
- Sacramento County STARS Program, Recovery Specialist
- Orange County Needs-Based Treatment Interventions for Mother's Engagement, ON TIME
- Des Moines, Iowa Moms Off Meth
- Circle of Parents Recovery Supports Programs.

### **Sacramento County Parent and Staff Shared Leadership Task Force**

This task force brings parents and child protection workers together to strengthen how child welfare services are offered in Sacramento County. Parents and staff identify ways that parents can help plan services for children and families. The goal is to give parents a voice so that they can advise child protection services (CPS) and share insights about what families need.

#### *The Role of the Sacramento County Parent Leader*

Parent Leaders are parents who have had previous CPS experience and whose cases have been closed. They must have a desire to make a difference and improve services to families by sharing their experiences.

Parent Leaders use their expertise in a variety of ways. They provide outreach and support to parents currently involved with CPS, help develop materials to be given to parents involved with the system, share their experiences with community members and organizations and give feedback to CPS staff to improve services.

Current Parent Leaders from Sacramento County reported the following activities with families and communities:

- Community activities
  - Weekly orientation services are offered to families currently involved with the child welfare system
  - Scheduled presentations are presented to recovery centers and community organizations for the dual purpose of educating communities and recruiting parents.
- Interactions with parents
  - Meet with parents during the first protective custody hearings
  - Coordinate a parent support phone line
  - Match with and provide continuous personal supports to parents in dealing with and navigating through requirements of child protection services.
- Interactions with child protection services
  - Accompany workers to emergency response placements
  - Accompany workers to long-term-placements
  - Share their stories during new child protection workers trainings.

#### *Training of Sacramento County Parent Leaders*

Sacramento County Shared Leadership Task Force has received support and training from Parent's Anonymous. Parents Anonymous has been instrumental in helping bring awareness to the Task Force on the importance of partnering with families to attain success. Training provided by Parent's Anonymous to Parent Leaders includes but is not limited to:

- Shared Leadership Training and ongoing technical support
- Mandated Reporter's Training
- Confidentiality Training.

Sacramento County's Training Support for Parent Leaders includes:

- Child protection services 101 (Basic new workers training and differential response training)
- Sensitivity Training
- Monthly ongoing training and support (subjects determined by Parent Leaders).

#### *Recruitment of Sacramento County Parent Leaders*

Sacramento County Parent Leader recruitment efforts include:

- Word of mouth
- Parents are referred by former attorneys and child welfare workers
- Public Service Announcements
- Newsletters and local newspapers.

### *Funding for the Sacramento County Parent Leaders*

This initiative (including the Parent Leader's salary and stipends) is funded through:

- Americorp (Home Visitors Program)
- Casey Foundations

The Shared Leadership Task Force has developed guidelines for participation and an application profile. This Task Force requires at least 6 months of sobriety for parents to volunteer. Parents are then eligible to make a formal application for additional interaction with families. Volunteers receive gift certificates for their involvement.

### *Resources for the Shared Leadership Task Force*

Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services  
CPS Staff Liaison  
Martha Haas  
916-875-0143  
[haasma@saccounty.net](mailto:haasma@saccounty.net)

Parent Leader  
Angela Lebeau  
[cpsparentleaders@saccounty.net](mailto:cpsparentleaders@saccounty.net)  
916-875-0729

Parents Anonymous Inc.  
909-621-6184  
[www.parentsanonymous.org](http://www.parentsanonymous.org)  
[www.parentleadershipnetwork.org](http://www.parentleadershipnetwork.org)

Americorp  
1-800-942-2677  
[www.americorp.org](http://www.americorp.org)

Annie E. Casey Foundations  
410-547-6600  
[www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)

### **Kern County, California, Parent Leaders**

Kern County California has developed a Parent Leader project to mentor parents currently involved in the child welfare system. The written information about the Kern County Parent Leader is directed to the parent. It includes personal vignettes that show parents' successes. The information also offers assistance to

help parents find acceptance with their current circumstances and assistance to find appropriate ways to engage in the recovery process.

### *The Role of the Kern County Parent Leader*

The Kern County parent leaders have reported the following activities with families and communities:

- Community Activities
  - Parent Leaders facilitate community presentations to the recovery community and other community based social service programs
  - Parent Leaders are in the process of establishing parent support groups
  - Parent Leaders are in the process of developing a parent task force
  - Parent Leaders are in the process of developing volunteer recruitment protocols.
- Interactions with parents
  - Currently parent leaders operate via a Parent Helpline. The line is monitored during regular business hours. Parents can call 24 hours a day. A parent leader retrieves the messages after hours and responds accordingly.
  - Parent Leaders have on occasion visited court rooms with parents to provide support.
- Interactions with child protection services.
  - Child welfare workers can request a Parent Leader to accompany them to meetings with parents
  - Parent Leaders have accompanied child welfare workers to foster care homes for placement of children in protective custody.

### *Training for Kern County Parent Leaders*

Kern County Parent Leaders receive their support and training directly from the county department of human services. Their training includes:

- Social worker training (new worker)
- Parents are also included in any training deemed necessary by Parent Leader Coordinator.

### *Funding for the Kern County Parent Leaders*

Kern County Parent Leaders are hired directly through the county hiring process as “Extra Help” employees. Parent Leaders are hired for a period of nine months and the contract is renewable after a two month waiting period.

Kern County is in the process of developing more formal information and publications and at this time had no further written information to share. Kern County is interested in sharing more written information when it is available.

*Resources for the Kern County Parent Leader*

Kern County Human Services  
Social Worker Supervisor  
661-631-6071

Kern County Human Services  
Parent Leader Coordinator  
Lisa Smell  
661-631-6337

Kern County Parent Leader Helpline  
661-631-6065

Kern County Parent Leader  
Charlotte Daniels  
661-205-4081

**Santa Clara County Mentors for Moms Program**

This mentoring program provides mentors to moms currently involved in the dependency court process. Mentors provide a realistic approach because of their past involvement in the dependency court.

*The Role of the Mentor for Moms*

The role of the Mentor for Moms is to guide parents involved in dependency court through the system, model a clean and sober lifestyle, support parents, offer hope for recovery and reach out to the parent even before they are engaged in formal treatment.

Based on the resources supplied and through conversations with those involved in the Mentors for Moms, the following activities were reported:

- Community Activities
  - The mentors make weekly rounds through the treatment and recovery programs in the community to meet with mothers and support them in the program setting
  - Mentors are present at parenting classes
  - Mentors are guest speakers at graduations at Substance Abuse Programs.
- Interactions with parents
  - Mentors meet with moms at any place that is safe and agreed upon by the mentor and the mother
  - Mentors will take parents or meet parents at meetings, support groups, etc...

- Mentors have regular phone contact with parents
- Mentors meet parents at transitional housing setting.
- Interactions with courts/attorneys.
  - Mentor contact is initiated by court appointed attorneys of the parents
  - Mentor supports parents at their drug court hearings
  - Mentor makes active efforts to meet with parents at the detention hearing (72 hours from the emergency response)
  - Mentor is in the court house every day that court is in session to make contact with moms regardless of hearing type.

*Training for Santa Clara Mentors for Moms*

Santa Clara training support for Mentors for Moms includes:

- Confidentiality training
- Ethical responsibilities
- DHS Training, new worker training and any other deemed appropriate
- Domestic Violence Training.

Training planned for the future:

- Train mentors on stages of recovery.
- Any other training deemed necessary to support expansion of program.

*Future Developments for Santa Clara Mentors for Moms*

- Working on goals to build collaborative relationships within the court systems as well as other service providers
- Working to establish intervention and outreach goals
- Working to establish protocols for follow-up and outreach efforts with parents once their case has left dependency court, continued support to parents in all stages of recovery and reunification.
- Working to establish an administrative protocol that would notify mentors before 72 hour detention hearing to allow them to make immediate contact with parents.

*Funding of the Mentors for Moms*

The Mentors for Moms Program is a public/private collaboration, jointly funded by the Santa Clara Juvenile Defenders law firm, the Santa Clara County Department of Alcohol and Drug Services, and the Santa Clara County Department of Family and Children Services. This initiative is funded through a grant from the Department of Drug and Alcohol, SAMHSA and an expansion federal grant.

*Resource for the Clara County Mentors for Moms*

Hilary Kushins  
Attorney at law  
408-995-442 Extension 11

**Lake County, Minnesota, Department of Human Services**

In Lake County, Minnesota, the Department of Human Services has taken a creative approach to providing mentoring services to parents involved in the child welfare, juvenile courts and alcohol and other drug treatment systems. While there is no formal parent mentoring/leader component in place, foster care givers recognized the need for additional supports to parents and have been willing to act as mentors to parents.

Through conversations with Lake County Department of Human Services staff the following information was supplied:

*Role of the Lake County Parent Mentor/Leader*

- Interactions with parents
  - Parent mentors (foster parents) provide respite services to parents
  - Parent mentors provide transportation to appointments and other daily tasks
  - Parent mentors are a source of support through sharing dialogues with parents about their current family circumstances
  - Parent mentors have been like extended family members in support of the family.

*Future Developments of the Lake County Parent Mentor/Leader*

Lake County is currently discussing ways to further define and expand this mentoring component within the respective county communities.

*Funding of the Lake County Parent Mentor/Leader*

Parent mentors (foster parents) receive compensation through an hourly contract that is not included in their current payment as foster parents.

*Resource for the Lake County, Minnesota, Parent Mentor/Leader:*

Mike Kendall  
Lake County Community Human Services Department  
218-834-8300

## **Reno, Nevada, Foster Grandparent Program**

Reno, Nevada's Foster Grandparent Program's primary goal is to provide mentoring relationships for youth currently involved in the juvenile court system. In the past three years, their outreach has also extended to drug court and provides mentors to parents.

### *The Role of the Foster Grandparent*

The Foster Grandparent Program, which is sponsored by the Elvirita Lewis Forum, was established in Northern Nevada in 1967. Grandparents assist the children by tutoring, being a role model, and mentoring. For the youth, this program can offer companionship that is dependable and trustworthy.

Foster Grandparents Program information reports the following:

- Interactions with youth
  - Mentors are paired with each youth
  - Mentors participate in social activities with youth
  - Mentors are role models to youth
  - Mentors spend time with youth as friends and not officials.
- Interactions with parents
  - Court appointed mentors (foster grandparents) work with parents currently involved in drug court and share wisdom, expertise and encouragement in parenting. They strive to help families reunite and become healthy through their involvement.
- Interactions with communities
  - Mentors have and are developing relationships with schools, juvenile halls, boys and girls clubs and other youth serving organizations.
- Interactions with courts
  - Foster Grandparents are appointed by the Court to work directly with families.
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### *Training for Foster Grandparents*

- Foster Grandparents are provided training specific to their interactions with various agencies
- Foster Grandparents receive initial drug court training
- Foster Grandparents attend conflict-resolution and positive discipline training
- Foster Grandparents attend monthly in-service training.

### *Funding for the Foster Grandparent Program*

Because of the Older American Act of 1965, there are particular compensation limits for Foster Grandparents. These limits are set to avoid any undo hardships that would arise out of receiving monetary compensation. Foster Grandparents are paid a stipend of \$2.55 an hour and commit to work 20 hours per week.

Additional volunteer benefits are:

- Mileage reimbursement
- Annual physicals
- Volunteer insurance.

The initiative funded through:

- Corporation for National Service
- Elvirita Lewis Forum
- Foundation Grants
- Public Donations.

### *Resource for the Foster Grandparent Program*

Executive Director  
Mary Ann Dyer  
Foster Grandparents Program  
1552 C Street  
Sparks, Nevada 89431  
775-358-2768

### **Parent Leader/Mentor Programs with Paid Staff**

Other efforts initiated to involve parents in parent mentoring relationships when it comes to child welfare, juvenile courts and alcohol and other drug treatment use paid employees. The paid staff members assume roles of Recovery Specialist or Recovery Coaches.

A definition of Recovery Coach or Specialist is stated in Minnesota's *A Tool Kit: Recommended Protocols and Practice Guidelines for Working with Children and Families involved in the Child Protection Court System and in need of Services for Problems with Alcohol and Other Drugs*, in the *Engagement* section:

“Recovery Coaches/Specialist will be our tool to provide immediate access to recovery and treatment services that are unable to be addressed, including, navigating through the treatment resources available. Due to financial, cultural, location and bed availability, all of which can be most time consuming, by removing these barriers to treatment you can limit a great amount of time in out-of-home-placement and increase reunification. Ensuring continuity and effectiveness of the delivery of service will provide hope and accountability to our clients, which is essential to progress.”

## **Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, AODA IV-E Waiver Demonstration.**

One such Recovery Coach model is illustrated in the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Recovery Coaches.

The primary goal for the Recovery Coach AODA enhancement is to actively address the substance abuse problems of caretakers. Addressing these problems helps parents move toward reunification as safely and quickly as possible. A secondary goal is to facilitate information sharing between child welfare, AODA providers and court systems so that permanency decisions are based on accurate and timely information.

### *Role of the Recovery Coach*

A Recovery Coach is typically a certified or licensed Alcohol and Other Drug Counselor. The Recovery Coach work is done in conjunction with other outlined services by the child welfare and dependency courts.

Recovery Coaches are different from the parent partner in that they are paid, paraprofessional staff matched with families to provide support in accessing and navigating AOD services and providing additional recovery supports.

### *Training for Recovery Coaches*

Recovery Coaches participate in very extensive human services and court training for defining and clarifying the roles with families, courts and child welfare. Recovery Coaches also receive other training and participate in various professional development seminars.

### *Resources for Recovery Coaches*

Illinois AODA IV-E Waiver Demonstration  
Interim Evaluation Report  
State Of Illinois  
Department of Children and Family Services

Children and Family Research Center  
School of Social Work  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## **Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services STARS Program Recovery Specialist**

The function of the Recovery Specialist is the same as the previous definition of Recovery Coaches. Recovery Specialists work within the STARS Program. STARS is a direct component of the Drug Dependency Court in Sacramento County.

### *Resource for the Recovery Specialist and STARS Program*

Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services  
Alcohol and Drug Services Division  
Dependency Drug Court

## **Orange County, California, Needs-Based Treatment Interventions for Mother's Engagement**

The role of the Recovery Mentor is the same as the previous definitions for Recovery Specialist and Recovery Coach. Recovery Mentors work in the ON TIME Program. ON TIME is a direct component of Drug Dependency Court in Orange County. ON TIME includes an additional program component, a vocational piece.

### *Resource for the Orange County Needs-Based Interventions for Mother's Engagement*

Orangewood Children's Foundation  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration  
Center for Substance Abuse Treatment  
ON TIME (Final Report)

## **Des Moines, Iowa---Moms Off Meth**

Additional recovery supports are provided through traditional support groups. Support groups have been formed to provide a safe, caring place for individuals experiencing some of the same circumstances in life to share and find support for themselves and others. With the current rise of Methamphetamine abuse, many support groups are springing up. One particular group is Moms Off Meth.

### *Role of Moms Off Meth Support Groups*

The original idea for the Moms off Meth support group came from a community meeting in Ottumwa, Iowa. Child protection workers were overwhelmed with the time and energy it took to help the moms on their case loads using methamphetamines as the primary drug.

The group specifically supports moms recovering from meth. It is believed that this culture of drug abuse is even more cunning than the rest and the groups allow the moms to hold each other accountable as well as challenge the symptoms of the addiction that are most prevalent in meth addicted populations.

Group leaders have been instrumental in assisting parents to write out their thoughts, address issues with the child protection system and following through with child welfare requirements and other supports. The support groups are, and want to remain, separate from any direct service of the department of human services.

#### *Training for Moms Off Meth Support Group Leaders and Facilitators*

Group leaders or facilitators are educated on issues pertaining to juvenile court and the child protection human services systems so they can be a source of education and information to moms who attend the support groups.

#### *Resources for Moms Off Meth Support Groups*

Cheryl Brown  
Crisis Center and Women's Shelter  
Co-Founder Moms off Meth Group  
641-684-3910

Judy Murphy  
Meth Specialist  
Iowa Department of Human Services  
641-684-3910

#### **Circle of Parents - From Dads to Grandparents to Parents in Recovery States' Experiences in Supporting Diverse Populations**

Circle of Parents believes that all parents face a variety of challenges, yet certain groups of parents encounter a unique set of issues that compounds their ability to successfully recover from addiction and reunify with their children. Circle of parents programs operate across the country to provide parent-led, self-help groups where parents and caregivers can share ideas, celebrate successes and address the challenges surrounding parenting. Those involved in the Circle of Parents include groups of fathers, grandparents raising grandchildren, incarcerated parents, parents raising children with special needs, parents in recovery and rural parents. Circle of Parents introduces the framework and support for group development.

*Resource for Circle of Parents*

Circle of Parents  
200 South Michigan Avenue  
Suite 1700  
Chicago, IL 60604  
[www.circleofparents.org](http://www.circleofparents.org)

**Additional Publications and Resources**

FGDM: An Evidence based Decision-making Process, Child Welfare Protecting Children, A Professional Publication of American Humane, volume 19, Number 4, 2005

American Indian Symposium on Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Briefing Book

Sacramento County Dependency Drug Court Evaluation Findings, April 2005

A Family's Guide to the Child Welfare System, Child Welfare League of America, December 2003

Bulletin, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Issues guidance on Alternative Response to reports of child maltreatment, #00-68-4, April 4, 2000

Minnesota IDTA Best Practice Inquiry

National Parent Aide Network...[www.preventchildabuse.com/parent.htm](http://www.preventchildabuse.com/parent.htm)

Mentors Valuable for Recovery: Healthy peer relationships heal, New York City Voices: July/September 2003

An Addiction Recovery Glossary: The Languages of American Communities of Recovery (William L. White, October 23, 2002)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act

Family Support America... [www.familysupportamerica.org](http://www.familysupportamerica.org)

Understanding Substance Abuse and Facilitating Recovery: A Guide for Child Welfare Workers, National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare...[ncsacw.org](http://ncsacw.org)

Family to Family, Tools for Rebuilding Foster Care, Back from the Brink, Annie E. Casey Foundation, March 2002