



Friends of the Children - Los Angeles

Annual Report FY 2020 - 2021

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Department of Mental Health Contract

#280002



Program Highlights



During this reporting period, Friends of the Children – Los Angeles (FOTC – LA) continues to advance our partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health to prevent foster care entry, improve family stability and wellbeing in Antelope Valley (AV). FOTC – LA is currently providing **1:1 professional mentoring support to 48 children with an additional eight (8) youth in the queue to expand our reach to 56 children in all.** The FOTC – LA model of care was designed to strengthen families placed at high risk of entering foster care.

The demographics for the children served are **64% boys and 36% girls. The racial/ethnic background of our youth is 50% Latino, 39% Black, and 11% White. 91% of families speak English as their primary language. The mean age of our youth is 5.5 years old. All children live predominantly in one of three areas in AV: 55% in Lancaster, 36% in Palmdale, and 9% in Little Rock.** With this backdrop, FOTC – LA redoubled its' efforts during this contract year to support both child and parents with material, emotional, and resource support. With many of our youth going to school virtually, FOTC – LA mentors have found creative ways to keep children engaged, having fun, and learning. Youth took part in virtual tours to museums, nature, art, and multiple STEM activities. With the addition of resources such as Caribou and IXL, FOTC – LA has been able to focus on school success to prevent the widening of the achievement gap during prolong periods of distance learning.

Program Implementation

The matrix below gives a snapshot of the number of referrals FOTC - LA fielded to complete our enrolment deliverables for this year. Many of the children referred to FOTC - LA have come from community-based providers and DCFS. The majority of youth referrals fell outside the criteria of the FOTC - LA Department of Mental Health contract. FOTC - LA continues to work closely with DCFS Regional Administrators to refer more children to surpass enrolment goals and serve 8 additional children, growing to 56. Both Palmdale and Lancaster DCFS Regional Administrators have since directed a lead from each office to make sure eligible children are connected to our AV team for enrolment as a part of their case review process when closing out emergency response referrals. Due to this important system shift, FOTC - LA is able to maintain momentum by keeping the enrollment window open for additional youth. . Due to this important system shift, FOTC - LA is able to maintain momentum by keeping the enrollment window open for additional youth.

# of Referral Partners	Total Youth Referrals	Total Youth Served
14	150	48

Our Mission Statement

"We believe in keeping families together and ending multi-generational poverty."



How Did We Support Parents

- Provided an average of **12.5 hours of mentoring** to children, monthly.
- Convened **monthly Parent Cafes** for parents to grow and build community.
- Provided **monthly deliveries of essentials to 48 children.**
- Connected **37 families** to mental health services.
- **2,290 Consultations** with Parents and Caregivers.
- Added **7 new community-based partners** in Antelope Valley

Parent Cafe: Peer Learning Community



Needs

Understand child's emotional world by learning to read emotional cues.



Security

Honor their innate wisdom and desire for child to be secure.



Self-Esteem

Enhance the development of child's self-esteem.



Support

Support child's ability to successfully manage their emotions.

Learned Lessons

- Build relationships as a determinant of success
- Increase digital access and digital options
- Understand digital learning had pros and cons including widening the learning gap
- Continue flexibility for provision of emergency support to families.

These learned lessons led to FOTC - LA providing material items (e.g., food, diapers, hygiene, and cleaning supplies); assistance with isolation needs (e.g., e-mentoring for children, with phone/virtual home visits, and connections through deliveries); parenting resources (e.g. parent education, crisis intervention, employment assistance, etc.); and staff time to help link families to other local, state, and federal supports and benefits (e.g., food, housing, unemployment, etc.).



Virtual Mentoring

- 96% of youth made progress toward school success, such as finishing homework, regularly attending school, or staying focused in the classroom.
- 96% of youth made progress on social and emotional development, such as asking for help from a caring adult, practicing healthy ways to cope with stress, and building relationships with friends and adults who provide social support and connections to resources.
- 96% met their goals for Improved health.
- 92% of youth made progress on plans and skills for the future, including attaining skills for safety and independence, setting short and long-term goals, and monitoring progress toward them.

Parent Survey Findings

Key Themes Shared by Parents

- 86% said FOTC - LA supported them to BETTER UNDERSTAND THE CHILD'S NEEDS/STRENGTHS; and 88% said child's behavior had improved, making the home a more positive place.
- 84% said FOTC - LA helped STRENGTHEN FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS; and 84% said FOTC - LA supported caregivers to spend more time with other children.
- 91% said FOTC - LA helped them SUPPORT the child's SCHOOL SUCCESS. And 84% said FOTC - LA helped make caregivers' relationships with school personnel stronger.
- 92% said FOTC - LA connected caregivers to CONCRETE SUPPORTS that enrich and stabilize their family. And 77% said FOTC - LA promoted their ability to navigate systems and build community connections.

Analytics and Reporting

Parents reported, on average, positive changes in five social-emotional learning areas: Self-Awareness, Self Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, and Responsible Decision Making. Over 20% of caregivers reported positive changes in each learning area. Data was gathered from the baseline survey in comparison to the follow-up survey.



Milestones

“Friends LA has been a great opportunity for my daughter to learn necessary life skills while building a relationship with her Friend. We are always linked into resources that we need, and my daughter's Friend has been a consistent helping hand no matter what our needs are. I’m grateful to have this program assist me and my family.”



FOTC - LA supports children and families impacted by foster care.

